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MIELDENVOLD

THE STUDENT;

OR,

A PILGRIMAGE

THROUGH THE COUNTIES OF

NORTHUMBERLAND, YORKSHIRE, DURHAM, AND BERWICKSHIRE.

IN FOUR CANTOS.

By FREDERICK SHELDON.

"Lives there that man with soul so dead,
That never to himself has said,
This is my *own*, my native *shire?*"—Scott.

SECOND EDITION,
ENLARGED AND CAREFULLY REVISED.

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PREFACE TO MIELDENVOLD.

The following Poems will need but little Preface—"but little shall I say to grace my speech": a "poor player" would fain exchange his present unprofitable profession for something of a more permanent nature.

In the following narrative much will be found fault with, and some portions of it may deserve praise.

The first canto is merely to shew the danger that may accrue from a young and ardent mind—enthusiastic to a degree—indulging in those gay dreams of imagination and castle building, which the student is too often led into by the unbounded reins given to a luxurious imagination.

> He had abjured the world, and in its stead
> He did create, &c.

As a talented author has justly observed—"The habit of what, in common parlance, is termed 'castle building,' has a most pernicious influence on the health of the mind. There is a legitimate exercise of the imaginative faculty which is advantageous to the understanding, and to this no reasonable objection can be urged. But when the fancy is allowed to 'body forth the forms of things unknown,' much evil will result. Many habituate themselves to

dream with their eyes open, without their senses being literally shut. This condition of mind, borders closely upon the confines of insanity."

The Second Part is a paraphrase of a tale I some years ago read in "Blackwood's Magazine," ascribed, I know not with what truth, to Professor Wilson. I have endeavoured to pourtray the feelings of a shipwrecked man struggling with strong mental hallucination.

The Third Part is likewise a literal paraphrase from a fragment by a talented writer, of whom, and of the above-mentioned gentleman, I ask pardon for my literary plunder.

For the Scenes in Northumberland and elsewhere touched upon, they have nothing to do with the Poem — just as much as Childe Harold has to do with his Pilgrimage. They were each written on the spot; for in most of the towns and villages described, I have "strutted my hour upon the stage," and "made myself a motley to the view."

To the nobility and gentlemen of Northumberland, I am under great obligations, especially to His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, who, with a modesty only equalled by his charity, has more than once aided me, not for my Poem's sake, which makes my gratitude the more overflowing.

To all subscribers I return thanks, as well as to those who may hereafter purchase the book.

Berwick, June, 1843.

TO THE CHEVIOTS.

Yes, 'tis the same—the wind of Heaven blows
  Around those hills kist by the lightnings' cloud,
As rude as those where Patriot Tell arose—
  Beneath whose shafts the might of Austria bowed.
To the bright sky yet rise those dark blue hills,
  Barren of verdure, save their native heath;
'Mid beds of granite gush their native rills,
  And Liberty from wild flowers culls her wreath.

Winter hath swathed your towering heads in snow,
  The frost hath bound your rills in icy belt;
Mankind have felt the change which seasons prove,
  But Time on thee expends his rage unfelt.
Still as ye were, still do ye proudly rise,
  Bound to your rocky beds, your stony feet,
Based in the valleys—and the fickle skies
  Kiss your bald crests with sunbeams or with sleet.

How have I lived, since last I saw your forms
  From out my casement—home of early youth!
Since then, my path has been obscured by storms,
  And I have battled with woe, toil, and ruth;
But still my heart exulting bounds to thee,
  Around whose breast the light'ning plays in mirth;
Whate'er my state, my spirit still is free
  As when first Nature framed it at my birth.

vi.

She is my mother, and my only one ;
The one that bare me long hath ceased to live—
Cold, cold her heart, her earthly toil is done ;
Must we not die, and yet perforce I grieve,—
I grieve for home and friends—for kindred smiles,
To hear my name pronounced in loving tone ;
Remembered friends, with knavery's dark wiles,
Ring in my ears in wild and wailing moan.

But on the mountain's top where raves the wind,
And the free storm speeds onward in its might—
These, these are objects fitted to my mind ;
I love their sound and revel in the fight.
I am thy child, Oh, Nature !—and to thee
I give a reckless offspring's offering.
Whate'er I am, my soul, my limbs are free ;
And to thy glades I do in fondness cling.

Oh cast me not off—for man hath sickened me ;
That cursed love for gold hath damn'd his soul,—
Where'er he haunts no love can ever be ;
That devil, mammon, keeps all 'neath controul,
And like an eagle do I speed to thee.
Thy mountains, rocks, rude dells and roaring streams,
Thy woods of gloom my dwelling aye should be ;
There would I pass away my time in dreams.

My nature is not harsh—the world hath turn'd
My sweetness into gall ; and I will wage
A deadly war on it—my spirits yearned,
And when I sought for love I met stern rage.
Let life flow on—for me these mountains bleak,
Had I my wish, should ever be my home,
Until I changed it for the grave I seek,
When Death has struck and seal'd my earthly doom.

INTRODUCTION TO MIELDENVOLD.

Good reader, pause awhile, with patient face,
Make up your mind to wade through seas of rhyme,
Dull and prosaic as a Wesleyan grace;
A murd'rous way of killing mortal time.
The poor player, in his leisure hours,
Has framed these lines to meet the public eye;
Perchance among the weeds you'll find some flowers,
Cherish them, or else, alack! they die.

Mahomet, they say, he wrote the holy Coran;
The Turks affirm it—so it must be true.
Witness his life from Mecca unto Oran,
He penn'd their manual with a selfish view;
To get himself a place secure on high,
He acted wrong—I think,—I'm but a learner;
Because a place in heaven you cannot buy
As captains their commissions do on *terra firma.*

I think, instead of writing balderdash,
Of Houris, Paradise, and such dull stuff,
Together making such a Turkish clash,
That to an Englishman 'tis *quantum suff.*

Instead of this, I think, 'twould been much better,
If he some charitable dome had founded
For madmen, idiots, widow, maid, or debtor,—
I think his fame abroad would more have sounded.

That is the way our modern nobles act,
By gout or rheumatism (fortune's coupled mate),
Or riotous living—nay, it is a fact—
They bring their bodies very near Death's gate,
Now unprepared—with pale fear trembling o'er;
Before like porpoises in wealth they wallowed,
They build their temples hov'ering on three score—
And so abjure the rakish life they followed.

Or else they found a school for electricity,
Or to some college leave their books of lore;
Thus making merit of necessity,
Leaving what they have no further use for.
'Tis like the sordid miser in the fable,—
Who dying, lay, and struggling, gasp'd for breath;
He clung to hope and life whilst was he able,
And left his gold when ta'en himself by Death.

But God forbid I slandered noble classes—
Condemning all for faults of two or three;
There yet are titled lads and golden lasses,
Benevolent and wise—as fair as free.
I mean to write a something three parts long;
The scene is laid in England, France, or so;—
In the nineteenth century—I may be wrong;
Say—should I a little earlier backward go?

About this time, I mean to sing, or write;
(Either is proper, so that one of them I do)—
According to our modern words I will indite
A long account, distinct, yet very true;
I don't think 'twill be quite distinctly so.
I'll tell the truth, or else I am a sinner.
I do not doubt in time I'll wiser grow;
Though now I write for fame, and part for dinner.

I'm half inclin'd to drop this first essay;
So many men of talent try and fail,—
'Twill do to wile the winter's night away;
To be the "observ'd of all" might make one quail.
Yes, at Castaly's fount I think I'll taste,
Though I have some misgivings I may sink;
Well, well—no matter,—'twill but be a waste
Of paper, time, pens, words, and sable ink.

That priest of Nature—Wordsworth's almost done,
And Southey, whose fine brain was hung in cloud
Of mental imbecility—that hid the sun
Of reason stern Death to the grave hath bow'd.
Farewell! thou gen'rous noble-minded bard;
Thou did'st me kindness once—oh, who shall seize
Thy pen and bays!—of poet's thou the card—
Thy life a golden day, of hope and ease.

Oh, might such life of literature be mine;
Devoted to the muses—free from cares;
Oh, state of happiness, and life divine,—
He who now writes—ah, differently fares;

For I with daily want must boldly fight,
And win my way with fiddle as I may;
Or acting merrily our parts at night,—
Or scribbling verses for poetic lay.

Campbell has written well, pure Nature's feeling
Triumphant reigns throughout his printed works;
Live authors are from dead ones ever stealing,—
Moore's Lalla Rookh, depicting Greeks and Turks:
Rogers from Helicon has disappeared;—
There's Ainsworth, Marryatt—great Scott is gone,
Or Bulwer, whose the one that yet has near'd;—
Where sat the wizard of the north upon.

Banim has gone—a true born son of Erin,
An unsophisticated poet—verse or prose,
And merry Dickens, onward careless steering
Mid mirth and woe, and James, not of the Rose.
I thrust myself unheeded in your ranks;
Although you on me gaze with searching eye;
Although I criticise, in rudest pranks,
I pray you scorn not my obscurity.

Yet, let me pause—what I'm about to do?
Well should I look e'er o'er the cliff I dash;
What! may I not my wayward muses woo?
Then come the critics with their stinging lash,
And should I swim—"A thousand crowns to one."
Oh, I must strain the utmost of my soul.
Yes—thus I finish what I have begun,
Though o'er my sinking bark the waters roll.

'Tis yet youth's summer with me;—what of that?
Is knowledge, then, the growth of riper years?
I would win that I wish for, like the poor cat
I' the adage. Shall then the critic's sneers
Now beat me off the path I fain would tread,
Or break the cup with which I slake my thirst.
Then sing my muse from richest fancies fed;
'Tis but oblivion's stream can bring the worst.

'Tis but the schoolboy dreads the upraised rod;
The mind determined scoffs at menaced ills;
I venture on the paths by others trod,—
The river is supplied by lesser rills.
On life's rude stream I launch my fragile boat,
And trust to fortune for the wished-for port.
It sinks or swims—for now 'tis fair afloat;
I wind revellie or the mournful mort.

Why should I fear, if these my rugged rhymes
Meet not the favour of the fickle world;
Others have soared, and fallen in former times,
And from fame's pinnacle been rudely hurled.
Think of poor Keates, of Savage lonely death,—
Of modest White,—of Burns,—of Otway's fate;
Melodious Chatterton's expiring breath,—
All whom the world admired—when 'twas too late.

Judge not too harshly ye expectant crew,
"Damn me with faint praise," if so ye list,
Ye critics, who now rise unto my view;
The rod that you smite with, I never kist:

Or praise me sparingly, 'tis all the same ;
What genius I possessed I had before ;
My merits spring not from your loud declaim ;
So boldly do I leave the sheltering shore.

" I prattle out of tune, and do beguile
The thing I am by being otherwise."
As April clouds alternate cloud and smile,
Or sunlight on the smiling ocean lies.
Canst tell what storms disturb its deepest waves ;
Our blithest joys are not from sorrow free.
Full oft, alas ! red passion's tempest raves
In hearts, when smiling brows are clad in glee.

I do but hide my nature for a time,—
Shading what true I am from mortal ken ;
And I am guilty,—if this be a crime,—
Yet young in years, but old in ways of men.
If damned, I quick retire just as I came ;
For pity to the public is a bait
Too poor to catch withal—who climbs for fame,
Must don his armour 'gainst the stings of fate.

If I succeed, I follow other bards,
And cut up left and right our author's living ;
I've ta'en my cue, and I can play my cards
With any adversary in England breathing.
I'm being what I loath ; What, beg for praise.
My boat is trimmed to meet this sea of trouble ;
I know full well the various ends and ways
Of men—they are all at best a bubble.

I have a hero and a heroine,
One is a mortal—spiritual the other,
Of heavenly birth—mixed in this lay of mine,
With other matters—making jingling pother,
Love, that prime mover of the human heart,
That passion of our youth, and manhood's fire,
We here impress it now, to bear its part,
Whether virtuous or slave to hot desire.

Oh, Love! where shall I find thee free from crime,
Like that pure flame that dwelt in Penel'p's breast,
Which lodged in Juliet's heart of olden time,—
Which Thisbe warmed, and Carthage queen confest.
Say, is the flame which dwelt in Hero's soul,
Now quite extinct; or hath some jealous mate
An Eleanora quenched it in her bowl;
The doom of love is aye a bitter fate.

Dwellest thou in gilded halls, as sung by Homer;
In lowly wattled cots, as Milton saith?
Is Shakspeare's definition a misnomer?
What poet yet hath wrote in whose penn'd faith
We may believe?---we juggle with the mind,
And search in vain for that our wisdom seek.
A spirit dwells within this fleshy rind
Of ours, too potent to be always meek.

As Byron writes---no more; "my daring muse away;
For many a mountain path have we to tread;"
If follow ye our wanderer o'er the spray,
Much may be seen ("too much I fear," is said)

On *Esperance ; Nil Desperandum*, on ;
" Good wine," they say, " doth never need a bush."
But I a forest, would be glad to don,
Could it advantage me in this same push.

Of Mieldenvold, begin the saddened strain,
Like distant music, let the lay begin ;
Or summer zephyr stealing o'er the main ;
In whispering fondness singing Nature's hymn.
Say on, prolific muse, of Mieldenvold,
The sharer of my days---friend of my youth,
Unto the world the wondering lay be told,
A lay of grief, of trembling, fear, and truth.

CANTO I.

MIELDENVOLD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Mieldenvold, a German Student—young, romantic, and of an enthusiastic disposition—in consequence of his devotedness to intense study acting on a heated imagination, sinks into a profound reverie, and, to use his own words, "slumbers days in sleep." In this condition, though the body be at rest, the never-halting mind still pursues her mysterious functions. He dreams so frequently of some fair goddess—the constant idol of his thoughts—until "belief o'er-masters his controul," and what he thought at first but fancy, he now adopts as reality; and hating the "garish eye of day," he longs for night, when slumber seals his eyelids up in unconscious trance, wherein he fancies he is transported to Faëry Land, and falls in love with the Princess—a "bright spirit to him ministering," whom he after in his hallucination marries. His description of the gorgeous scenery of the land of fayes and sprites—his admiration of his Angel Bride—his ungoverned transports on his fancied happiness—when lo! the picture changes—his sorrow and mad despair at her supposed death—"a serpent stung her, and she did die in these sad arms." His wild and touching lamentation for his Princess' loss—his wanderings in search of her whom he fondly believes will come again to him.

"Look on me, whose dust was once all fire."—Byron.

I knew him once, but that is over now,
And he I lov'd lies silent in the tomb;
The hand of Death hath laid the Student low,
And the dull grave hath seal'd his earthly doom:
And I but write of him I knew before,
Whose form on earth these eyes shall see no more.

Oh, Memory! bitter warder of the brain,
Before mine eyes recal those blessed scenes,
That I may roam at twilight hour again
With him, the partner of my boyish dreams:
The worm usurps sweet friendship's holy ties,
Thus as I write past scenes before me rise.

He was a student—medicine his theme,
Our house a rude and desolate chateau;
Remembrancer of time, pursue thy dream,
Why shakes my hand? why throbs my heated brow?
Why comes this mist to cloud my aching eyes?
Friend of my youth, once more before me rise.

He was a German, from the land of sprites,
Land of the raven's pine, and gloomy glen;
Where the wild huntsman's chase the hind affrights,
Through the Hartz Forest, far from haunts of men,
Where Hellekin's horns, from Kolfstein's Towers sound,
Where fayish gnomes and elves flit light around.

There 'neath the pine trees high and gloomy shade,
Where the wild brook, 'neath tangled brushwood, flows;
There, by some rocky cave, his form he laid,
Pillowed on thymy bank in soft repose:
There would he wander when the moon, at night,
Bathed his long tresses in her filmy light.

There would he pore on Schiller's knightly page,
O'er Kotzebue's, or else stern Goëthe's store
Of mingled lays of love and jealous rage,
Or he who did the gates of hell explore:
So drank his heart the numbers of the scroll,
As he each page with fervour did unroll.

No stranger was he to sweet Dante's lore,
Of Tasso's woes, or Petrarch's amorous pains;
Of sweet Boccacio's gay and endless store,
Of Ariosto's bold and flowing strains;
Of wild Rousseau's, or Voltaire's subtle pen,
Moliere shall make thee laugh with glee again.

I see him now, his tall and youthful form!
His locks of sable hue that round him hung;
His open brow, majestic as the morn,
When rosy day her portals ope hath flung;
When dew-eyed morning peeps through latticed bowers,
And fills with pearls the chalice of sweet flowers.

His pallid brow, where thought had set its mark;
O'ershadowed by his long and flowing hair;
His prophet-eye so bright, whence genius spark,
Emits the glance of love, or rank despair—
Alas! I knew him well, and these poor lines
The fragment of his life but ill defines.

In him antithetically mixed appeared
A total scorn of life or worldly joy;
Ne'er lived the thing the Student's heart e'er fear'd,
Nor did cold poverty breed him annoy;

His language ranked him 'mid the wise and brave,
'Twas gay at times, then gloomy as the grave.

Then would he deal forth witty sentences,
  And snare all hearts to him as in a mesh;
At times a Spencer, then Demosthenes,
  Cicero now, then Ovid—ever fresh
The various tales that fell from honied lips,
Sweet as the juice the bee from flowret sips.

At night he trimmed his study lamp with care,
  And then alone for days he'd silent be;
And, like the angry tiger in his lair,
  Disturb'd by coming foes—so oft was he,—
If questioned what his themes? at dead of night,
Forth from his casement shone his little light.

What were his themes? 'tis not for me to say,
  Gloomy imaginings spread o'er his soul;
Making his fancy rich in song or lay,
  Darkling as Erebus 'neath night's controul:
Studies of Almagest—unholy rites,—
'Twas said he practised in those Winter nights.

As various as 'twas mighty—deep as dark,
  His genius fram'd the ravings of despair;
His high-fed fancy instant caught the spark
  Of lighter essays—rhymes of maidens fair;
Of monarch's, peasant's, or wild bandit's strain,
The love-lorn shepherd or crusader's fame.

All the intelligence of German lore—
That rich and endless feast of soul—he knew ;
That banquet of the brain, sweet Reason's store—
And, like a bee, from flower to flower he flew,
And lightly touched on buds of lit'rature,
And sucked their honey deep as it was pure.

'Mid the many offsprings of his muse,
This but a trifle of his mighty mind ;
Tinged with the vivid touch of life-like hues,
The only one to suit you I could find :
As carelessly the tree her leaves doth give
To Winter's wind, his thought made this to live.

THE WILD HARPER.

The words were rash the faltering tongue had said,
And slowly parted lips that breathed the vow,
Torturing the heart that sorrowfully bled,
Consigning life to darkness, hope to woe ;
'Twas o'er—his tongue those words had pealed,
Rashly, alas ! the speaker's doom was sealed,
That told fond hope and love it ne'er could know.

The fractured ring and coin the page took back,
With scrolls of broken faith which too he bore ;
But her sweet portrait—that be Memory's rack,
Which ever at his heart the mourner wore :

Remembrancer of love that long had past,
Nipt as a lily in the Winter's blast:
Love gone, the heart is but a sterile track.

Some months he lived, but did he pine and pine?
What was his grief? Alas! he loved her first;
"Do not thou smile, false, faithless love of mine;"
Alas! for faith, his bleeding heart did burst,
And so they laid him in his narrow grave,
His hymn the Winter's winds that round him rave,
Yet ne'er lived bride with false affection curst.

Did she not hear thy sad and funeral bell,
As from her casement sounded the guitar?
Did she not hear its slow and solemn knell,
As did the sound come on the wind afar?
What were thy silks and jewels, faithless maid?
Thy first love pledged to him, then false betrayed:
Yet of such natures fickle wantons are.

Fair Greville's halls were lit, and festal blaze
Shone on the comer's dress, and oft they'd raise
The jocund laugh; the red wine flowed around,
And youthful forms sprang up to music's sound;
Fair maids were moving to sweet music's notes,
As cygnet light—on the water floats,
And fairy feet in measure beat the ground.

And she'd danced gay, in bridal 'parel drest?
Whilst he, her first love, low in death did rest;
She gave that lord the hand she pledged to him,
As through the dance the blushing bride did swim;

And yet her spirits felt oppress'd with woe,
As she did fear some ill she could not show ;
She thought the torches' glare looked ghostly dim !

And ever in her ear a voice it said,
" Full soon thy true love's grave thou sharest, false maid;
Thy dress a shroud, thy bridal bed of clay,
Thy doom is sealed ere blushing morning's grey :
Prepare thee, Bertha, perjured for thy task,
Grim Death is shrouding 'neath the gown and mask :
Hear'st thou my warning ? rise, and come away."

Now Greville's lord her tender ear hath wooed,
" Why does my love on sickly fancies brood ?"
And with his white plume did he brush her cheek,
As he would win his bride, her fear to speak ;
And then she looked up, and so sadly smiled,
The tear drop in her eye, which shone so wild ;
Ah ! never could that maid her terrors speak.

And Greville then did note her heart opprest.
A purse of gold he drew, and swift addrest
The Harpers round, to try their utmost skill,
And drive fear off that made fair Bertha ill ;
Then one stepped forth, with wild harp slung—
Then Bertha to her lord in terror clung,
And as they eyed him, all grew hushed and dim !

He threw across his breast his harp's rude band,
And played—such sounds ne'er came from mortal hand ;

Lords, knights, and ladies, did they list intense,
Those wild chords hushed their soul and chained their
sense ;
And Bertha thought, as did that Harper play,
The burden of his tune was, "Come away,"
And that they did advise her going hence.

She tried to stay—her foot obey'd the call,
And she did follow it across the hall ;
The guests gave back, a fearful lane they made,
Her lord looked on entranced—he could not aid ;
And Bertha followed slow that music's swell—
O ! were they heavenly sounds, or strains from hell ?
Those mystic numbers that wild Harper played.

The lordlings gazed, by bridal lamp and torch,
They saw her white dress flutter in the porch !
Yet still those sounds rung sweetly through the hall,
Filling their hearts with pleasure, thralling all :
O ! never were such mystic numbers heard—
It charm'd as does the snake the giddy bird,
And knights did feel those sounds their hearts appal.

Hushed silence there did reign—at length they heard
The whispered wailings of a woman's word ;
A voice reproachful, and its ghostly sound
Did chain them there, as tho' in magic bound :
O ! never were such guests and lordlings met,
Entranced sense, wild eyes, and teeth firm set,
And each ones feet seemed rooted to the ground.

At length they heard a loud and piercing shriek,
That did the charm which held their senses break;
And, led by Greville, rushed they to the door;
His bride was gone—that shriek of terror o'er!
They searched till morning's light—'twas vain, I ween,
No Bertha ever after that was seen,
Or Harper wild, who charm'd her o'er the floor.

They found her bridal chaplet drenched in dew!
Gone was its smell, its flowers faded too;
A broken ring lay by it, known too well,
As Greville stooped to take it up—a swell
Of music seemed to linger o'er his head,
Until, by fits and starts, it fading fled;
Yet naught else left his bride's dark fate to tell.

Those halls are silent now, for Greville's lord
Rushed to the field, and fell by foeman's sword;
And those benighted shun those fatal walls,
For on their frighted sense there wildly falls
That mystic strain which drew the bride away,
From love and light her perjured troth to pay,
To that dark doom which aye the heart appals.

And there were some who said that Harper was
Her first true love—kind Heaven avenged his cause,
And punished Bertha for her lover's moan;
What fate is hers? he rests enclosed in stone;

Whilst she her bridal trial must undergo,
Still hear that music falling sweet and low,
Which doth for ever seal her fearful doom.

This ballad will doubtless put the reader in mind of Lewis's "Fair Imogene." "I confess the cape, but not the sleeves." Bertha may tread in the footsteps of her faithless original, but the Harper is a different person entirely to "The Silent Guest." Gigantic his height, "with his skeleton head," and the accompaniments of the worms.

* * * * * *

One evening 'twas, we walked at twilight's time,
When nodding flowers close their winking leaves,
And sunset bathed in gold the flowing Rhine,
The night wind sighed—as one who lonely grieves;
And daylight like a tired bird sunk down,
Or lily, whose young buds are scarcely blown.

He told me all—he slumbered days in sleep,
And, oh! such visions rare which met his eye,
Of landscapes fair! of rugged hill and steep,
Of shady lawn, where rosy wood-nymphs hie!
And he did tell me all his eyes had seen,
When locked in sleep—spectator of his dream.

And then such palaces that met his view,
Of fairy towers that in splendour rise!
Of bubbling rivulets where palm-trees grew,
And domes of gold did glitter 'fore his eyes;
And he had shook away his earthly dress,
And walk'd with spirits in their loveliness.

As thus he roved where sunbeams ever shine,
Blest Tempe's Vale, or Arcady as fair,
Where peeps the topaz from the orient mine,
And strains of music float upon the air;
A nymph approached—a fiery barb her throne,
So fair!—man's eyes ne'er looked her likeness on.

Her robes were gossamer wrought by the fays,
A wreath of roses round her head she wore;
Her courser's housings were the sun's bright rays,
A hunting javelin in her hand she bore;
She sat like Dian on her starry throne,
As did the courser amble swiftly on.

Sudden—a mighty boar rushed from the wood,
With hideous tusk he sought that fay to wound;
The steed with sudden start and frighten'd mood,
Flung his fair rider on the thymy ground;
The huntress lay unhorsed in this rude fray,
Whil'st like the wind the courser swept away.

The beast with bloody tusk now paused awhile,
Then rushed on yonder form with rage to kill,
Had not this dreaming student as I tell,
Deep in his bosom launched the fatal steel;
Upreared the mighty beast in dying strife,
And then dropt back, bereft of breathing life.

* * * * *

At sunset time that spirit was his bride,
And her red lips on him did sweetly smile;
A band of spirits then him deified,
And hailed him sovereign of this happy isle;
And he before his fairy bride did bow,
Whilst she did plant a chaplet on his brow.

His bride was faultless made, her auburn hair
Was like the sun-beam in the summer's sky;
Her angel face so mild and heavenly fair,
The dove-like fondness of her mild blue eye;
She was not made for sorrow or distress,
But dwelt 'mid roses fair and ever fresh.

Where amarynths deck her gay pavilion,
Where pleasures ever new their gifts are strewing;
Pillowed on down—of purple and vermillion,
The curtains drawn, the diamond pillars shewing;
There did he rest, fann'd by his fairy bride,
Her breast his pillow—happy rest betide.

She was a princess, and he loved her well,
He drank intoxicating draughts with her;
E'en in her palaces, there did he dwell,
Bedecked with coral, pearls, and gold—jasper
Rubies—and emeralds of various dyes,
Adorn'd the cots which glittered to the skies.

And he was happy; though it was a dream,
As though he tasted on the earth this joy,
As though his waking hours this life had seen,
Frail mortal of thy pleasures be not coy;

What thou hast gained, in death thou canst not keep,
Thy joys are but a dream, thy death a sleep.

And then his pastime with that angel band,
  Sometimes upon the lucid lake they float,
By spicy breezes were they ever fanned—
  The golden seats ; and gunwales of the boat
Burnished with diamonds ; silken were the sails
Of purple, that did snare the balmy gales.

Then sung the angel band their choral staves,
  The whilst sweet music rose upon the air,
Whilst danced the vessel o'er the golden waves,
  Lulling to sleep the entranced voyager ;
These words unto the youth those spirits sung,
Whilst sleep had o'er his sense her mantle flung.

THE ANGEL'S LAY.

Mortal from thy land of birth,
The dull and gloomy globe of earth ;
Where the grosser vapours fly,
And the rain-cloud decks the sky.
Where 'midst wintry sleet and snow,
The weary traveller must go ;
Where 'midst blustering wind and rain,
The vessel skims the liquid plain ;
Or sinking in the angry surge,
From which they ne'er in life emerge,
The shrill winds sing the seaman's dirge.

Be happy in our fairy halls,
Where the voice of pleasure calls;
Here no tempest need'st thou dread,
Or rain to beat upon thy head.
Halcyon hours hand in hand,
Foot it on the yellow sand.
Fays do 'neath the cowslips sing,
And shake fresh odours from their wing;
Or, dance upon the fragrant mead,
Whose flowers bend not 'neath their tread.
Be thou happy, taste delight,
Now when joy is at the height;
Thy Peri rocks thee in her arms;
Here love may toy; for no alarms,
E'er chase the truant joys away,
Here securely may'st thou play.
When the cool and spicy breeze
Shakes the blossom from the trees;
When on orange branches rocking,
The mimic bird in music mocking
Sings unto its loving mate,
Happy still is true love's state.
List the murmurs of the dove,
Bird that aptly speaks of love.
By the fountains we will sit,
And hear around the linnets twit;
Joy to thee, thy Peri blest,
Joy to thee, daughter of the West;
To the small brook murmuring,
That from bank to rock doth fling

Its tiny spray, in brawling motion,
Sweeping onward to the ocean:
Apt illustrator of man,
Whose life is but a narrow span;
Belted in by hopes and fears,
Subject to old age and years.
The Summer's air is fraught with death—
The Winter's cold may stay his breath;
Man, made up with sad ostents,
But plaything of the elements:
Since the course of time e'er ran,
Helpless is the state of man.

We who are of angel birth,
Smile on the denizens o' th' earth;
Time's fell scythe can harm us not,
Sorrow is for men—our lot
Hath happiness too much in store,
For time to ship us for that shore,
Where dull oblivion's dusky wave
The shore of Pluto's regions lave.
Time cannot thin our flowing hair,
Or sear our hearts in brooding care;
Our bloom is amaranthine ever,
Nor can old Time it from us sever;
Nor strew the wrinkles on our brow,
As still in years our days do grow;
Nor pluck one feather from our wing,
Nor aught that age or care may bring

We are not judged by mortal years,
Nor subject to man's hopes and fears.
Time hath no limits that can chain
Our lives, or with his fingers stain
The undying beauty of our youth,
Or palter with our simple truth.
Years are to us but moments flying,
No tomb to shroud our dead—the dying
Ne'er we see, nor do we know
The period that shall bring us woe,
Nor mark the changes as we grow.

What are poor mortals' pleasures then?
And what the confined sports of men?
'Tis ours to ride upon the wind,
To roam as boundless as the mind;
To skim the angry ocean's spray,
To herald in the dawn of day;
To course at ease in the Winter's frost,
When with rime the hoary earth's imbost;
To dance i' th' sun-ray's glorious beam,
When his light falls chequer'd on branches sheen;
We roam by the rainbows, our harps we tune
I' th' Summer's heat of a golden noon.
We sing of the loves of the sprites of old,
Ere ambition made that angel bold,
When he drew to his cause, in strength of might,
Full many a phalanx of angels bright;
And waged war on his supreme God,
That could crumble to pieces the earth by's nod;

And made Heaven's crystal space a plain,
Where the spirits might fall and rise again;
When they pluck'd from its roots the earth-bound oak,
And as reeds the mighty cedar broke;
And warr'd till the glorious light grew dim
On rebel-angels and seraphim;
When they made the hills obey their power,
And scatter'd abroad that rocky shower;
Till Heaven trembled, and the crystal plain
Made night rejoice in her gloomy reign;
As if the empyreal arch of Heaven
By the rod of Chaos had then been riven;
And the charge of their ranks were like earthquakes shocks,
As they sought to o'erwhelm them with flinty rocks;
Till the Lord of all nations in might arose,
In thunder and fire dealt pain on his foes;
Till the wheels of his chariot in lightning and gold
O'er the necks of the fallen cherubim rolled;
Till the walls of Heaven did open wide,
Whilst onward in haste swept the mingled tide
Of routed angels, and their band,
Pursued in wrath by th' Almighty hand;
The rebels forced to the gaping brink,
In yells of terror did downward sink
To the fiery lake of brimstone below,
Their resting-place for evermore,
So Heaven was purged of its Hellish foe.

Or when the moon, in a Summer's night,
On rock and tree pours down her light;
Silvering all beneath her beam,
With holy calm and filmy stream;
Spirits that know no sin advance,
And in a merry roundel dance,
Where the ebb'd Neptune leaves the sands,
'Tis where the cherubims take hands,
In hollow glens, in beechen glade,
By river's brink, or wild wood's shade;
By waterfalls, or rocky caves,
Where crystal lake their margin laves;
Where Nature's hand hath scoop'd the hill
To founts, where bubbles by the rill;
Where naaids bask 'mid the waters' flow,
With oozy sedges round their brow;
Where wood-nymphs, i' th' alleys green,
Hunt i' th' train of their chastest queen.
Mortal hand could ne'er indite
The beauty of so blest a sight;
Mortal brain could ne'er conceive
A land, 'twould make his spirit grieve
To know he not inhabits there,
Where sky and earth are ever fair;
Where birds among the orange bowers
Sing all unseen, 'mid sweetest flowers:
Such happy life's withheld from man;
Not his the land where breezes fan;
O'erpowering sense with luscious sweets,
Where sky and water ever greets,

With sunny looks and smiling breast,
All Heaven in Nature's Summer drest.
Fair Peri, joy to all her race,
Joy to the sweetness of her face;
Beauty mantles on her cheek,
The rose of Sharon and lilly meek.
Sleep on thou dreamer, blest thy state.
That wak'st not; thus to know thy fate,
It is Elysium thou seest in thy sleep,
Could'st thou not slumber—then indeed thou'lt weep.

Spring had gone forth, and summer like a bride,
Shone out in loveliness its fair career.
The leaves were falling for 'twas Lammas tide,
The stern forerunner of the closing year;
Since to me did the dreamer tell his tale,
'Twas then spring time, now Autumn blew his gale.

I met him by the margin of the Rhine,
Whose stream by rugged cliffs still cleaves its way;
There still the ruins of many a holy shrine,
And Baron's fortress crumbling to decay—
Frowns on the sight; and darkles in the sun
Their towers with weeds and ivy now o'er run.

Silent the warder's horn at Matin Bell—
Silent the mustering of the chieftain's band;
The neighs of steeds; the warlike sounds that tell
A sudden foray on a foeman's land;
Silent the trumpet's note that oft hath rung,
To boot and saddle, while each warrior sprung

On to his steed, then fix'd the pennon'd spear,
Their fierce eyes gleaming 'neath their helmet's shade;
Their dark locks streaming, as each stern compeer,
A martial greeting to his baron made;
No more in iron cas'd they ride afield,
E'en mighty man unto time's scythe must yield.

No more from yonder turret, where wildest flowers
Wave to the passing breeze; the lady bright
Shall count the slow sad flight of lagging hours
Until they bring to her, her own true knight.
Her glove hath 'neath his plume faced foeman's glaive,
Besprinkled now with heart's blood of the brave.

'Twas there we met; a fearful change had spread
O'er the pale features of the Student's face;
The inward war of passions there I read,
The sallow shade of sorrow's hopeless trace;
Sunk were his eyes, their glorious light now dim
Like faded splendours of a cherubim.

His dark hair shadowing his pallid brow,
Where lay the hectic flushes faint o'erspread;
Silent his tongue, the music of whose flow
Enchanted, all his prattle now was fled:
So pale, so noble in his last despair,
The whilst sick sorrow did his heart strings tear.

I asked him of his love—his fairy bride,
The student shudder'd and grew sick of heart,
And on his brain there rush'd despair's fell tide,
Time hath no balm to ease that deadly smart;

He eyed me madly, and then ghastly smil'd,
I trembled then to note his look so wild.

"My fairy bride by me so long bewept,
Alas! she's gone, despite her fairy charms;
A serpent stung her, as she calmly slept,
And she did die, alas, in these sad arms;
I thought, alas, my beauty could not die,
A spirit being of immortality.

My beauty's blood hath crimson'd o'er the earth,
And Nature's wept with grief the sight to see;
I' the flowers cup her watery tears have birth,
And shower their drops on fairy-land and lea:
The dews of morning fall upon her breast—
When did my beauty seek her place of rest?

I sought my Peri in the morning's light,
By budding bough and scented asphodel;
I sought her where the streamlet floweth bright,
By violet banks, by wood and sunlit dell;
I sought her by the fountain's falling stream,
Where birds of melody sung blythe between.

I sought her by the ruin'd temple's aisle,
By the lonely altar on the mountains side,
I sought her by the time-worn marble dial,
By the rippling margent of the silver tide,
Which o'er the rock in sparkling cascade flows
In the myrtle-grove where acacia blows;

'Neath the palm-tree's shade where the filbert's grow,
Where laburnam scatters its golden showers,
Where the pale lilac and the foxgloves blow,
In the calm twilight of the evening hours,
When Phœbus' steeds had weary grown,
As he sunk to rest on his mountain throne.

There is a silent sorrow in this breast,
A stormy ocean, on whose barren shore
The ever-warring waters foaming crest'
In sullen murmurs dash with angry roar—
A confined fire within this soul hath lain,
Which time can never heal or priest can sain.

O earth, made crimson with my beauty's blood,
Unlawful shedding of my Peri's life;
The weeping flowrets drank the precious flood,
Grim king of shadows closed her dying strife;
Blind sight—dark deed—and never-ending sorrow—
Her eyes are shut, whose light the stars shall borrow.

Her breath hath fled to Flora's soft retreat;
And the sweet winds that canopied the earth,
All owe their fragrance to the flowers sweet.
There do the odours of their balm take birth—
The winds unheeded now through roses sigh,
When her honey-breath in sweetness passeth by.

The blush that mantled on her glowing cheek
Hath to the western sky its tincture given,
Her bloom outvied the morning's rosiest streak—
Aurora printed on the vault of heaven:

Her hair hath outshone Berenice's tress,
And deck'd the firmament with loveliness.

Roses beheld their brightness in her bloom,
  Lilies, nor purest snow, her skin outvied;
Her smile lit up the depths of evening's gloom,
  Her voice was as the murmur of the tide,—
It chants its lay of glory now above;
A long farewell my Peri and my love.

No flower so fair, no pearl or beauteous thing,
  But in herself their several essence lay;
No bird of plumage on its glorious wing,
  But she outsung the songsters of the spray:
Her Maker now hath bid my beauty live;
Wherefore, my soul, should I then for her grieve?

If thou canst bid the miser think no more
  Of the god Plutus, will I list to thee;
If thou canst bid the sea forsake its shore,
  And leave the stranded vessel on the lea;
If the fond father can forget his child,
Now dead, that lately in its vigour smiled—

Come then to me, and I will gaily sit
  Listening thy tale, nor think thou falsely prates.
Whate'er man loved, when dead he weeps for it;
  Not so the soldier, who his foeman hates:
Philosophy, thou bugbear of the wise,
If thou hast cordial, to my help arise.

No more shall pleasure win me with its charms,
A long farewell to happiness and thee;
Henceforth my dwelling be amidst wild alarms,
My heart the shore where beats a barren sea:
No more shall smiling hope my heart illume,
My joys, alas, are in my Peri's tomb."

This did the dreamer wail in loud despair,
No voice of mine could wean him from his grief;
Fell sorrow on his heart had fixed her lair,
Nor time nor joys could ever bring relief;
Deep in his heart, fixed by himself, there lies
The canker-worm of grief that never dies.

From his own dreams this bitterness he reap'd,
The wild enthusiasm of a noble mind;
Too much in study's springs his soul was steep'd,
His thoughts were gloomy—but the cocoa's rind
Hath sweetest milk beneath its rugged skin,
His soul was gentle as man's need to bin.*

His own wild thoughts had brought this sorrow on,
Self-exiled from his fellows, and the light,
The sun of fancy on his slumbers shone,
With all the gay romance of fiction bright:
He shaped unto himself a world of sprites,
Till his fond soul believed these gay delights.

He had abjured this earth, and in its stead
He did create a world of happiness
And peopled it with angels, and bespread
The hues of Tempe o'er its loveliness:

* Be,—"With every pretty flower that bin."—*Shakspere.*

And thus the poison gather'd o'er his soul
Until belief o'ermastered his controul.

Peace to the dreamer! may the lapse of years
  Cure thy fond sorrow for thy angel bride!
Weep not for her—unheeded fall thy tears,
  They cease not till the fountain's source be dried;
And bitterly thy heart in grief hath bled
For the gay vision thy heart nourished.

Upon his lonely pilgrimage he's gone,
  Hoping to find his lovely bride once more,
And all unheeded may the student roam,
  From coldest climate unto farthest shore:
Thy Peri-bride will come no more to thee,
Then wander thou no more o'er land and sea.

He doth believe again her form shall come,
  And with her presence cheer his drooping mind;
That is the thought that nerves the student on
  To chase a phantom flying as the wind.
God help thee, dreamer, in thy fruitless chase,
No more on earth thou'lt see that angel face.

END OF FIRST CANTO.

CANTO II.

THE ARGUMENT.

May—Lament for the Author's Brother, who died in his prime—Local Allusions to Northumberland — The Author's Marriage—The Wansbeck — Brinkburn Priory — Weldon Bridge — Rimside Moor—Whittingham — Glanton — Eglingham — Pow Burn — "The Percy Leap"—Wooler — The Cheviots — Humbledon Hill — The Glen—College—"Sullen Till"—Flodden Burn—The "Old, old, Man"—Ancient Ballad—"Battle of Flodden"—Yetholm—Vagrant Tribes—Faa the King of Gypsies — Berwick-upon-Tweed — Its Ramparts — Castle—Noble River—Spittal—Tweedmouth—Church Yard—Wilson the Poet — Sea Coast — Eyemouth — Coldingham Abbey — Houndwood—Fast Castle—"House of Ravenswood"—Dunbar—Haddington—Dalkeith—Edinburgh—Peebles—Dumfries—"Burns's Tomb"—Tavern and House —"Dunse dings a'"—Carberry Hill—"Duns Scotus"—The Tale progresses—Embarkation of Mieldenvold in pursuit of his Bride—The "El Dorado" of his hopes—The Ocean—Conjectures on the Fate of the President—The Scholar's gloom and wretchedness—Intense Heat—Sudden Storm—Rain—Wind and Lightning—Appearance of his Peri Bride—She beckons him to follow her—His mad plunge in the sea—The crew's vain attempt to save him—The Scholar gains a raft—His sufferings whilst floating on the sea—"The Queen's visit to Scotland"—The ocean Monster—The Student's despair—Appearance of the "Fairy ship and crew"—Fourth day, "nothing but dreary sea and sky"—Horrible conflict between his mental faculties and coming madness—His Bride again—The Shark—The Student's insanity—Intense agony—Hunger and thirst—Total insensibility—Denouement.

May! mild genial blushing May, is come,
Flowers now bud, and burst, and throw abroad
Their balmy fragrance, 'mid whose leaves the hum
Of summer bees are heard o'er thymy sod;
'Mid the recesses of the wood which erst
Threw flowers forth, which early Spring had nurst.

Crocus and primrose, sprung from winter's chain,
The sycamore and larch! the spreading thorn!
The elm hath donned her summer dress again,
And smell of herbs on fragrant breezes borne;
Mixed with the incense of sweet smelling May,
Tells of fair Spring and summer's holiday.

The naked branches hid 'mid rustling leaves,
Within whose shade the sweet birds sit and sing,
The blackbird now his whistling lay he weaves,
When all around is health and jocund spring,
And leaves of early dog-rose deck the spray,
Or scattered showers of May buds strew the way.

Here let me wander far from city smoke,
And see the hare and timid partridge run,
Startled by the sweated woodman's echoing stroke,
Or 'mid the growing corn the urchin's gun
Reverberates in volley quick and loud,
Whilst crows rise cawing in a scattered crowd.

My heart is full of joy! of silent pleasure,
Of gratitude and love to heaven and earth!
Filled and o'erflowing with a bounteous measure
With silent adoration! (from whose birth
My soul then draw'st thy joy) unto my God,
And let my fancy roam unchecked abroad.

Alone I've wandered o'er these woodland scenes,
Pond'ring o'er what my fate might be anon;
Musing in solitude on boyish dreams,
Or framing themes for unconnected song;

Here have I wandered, when the thick'ning shade,
Has pleasant arbour o'er me freshly made.

But now upon my arm there hangs my wife,
And with a face of confidence and joy,
She peers into my face, as if her life
Were wrapt up in my being—may nought destroy
That love which now exists between us twain,
But ever even-handed peace remain.

I tell to her the thoughts I had before—
Make her my confident; and so confide
All my boy feelings—all my youthful lore,
Within her heart my aspirations hide—
My friend, my comforter, my guide, my wife,
Her have I chosen as my mate through life.

To hear the coo of doves! the linnets sing!
The bleat of sheep, and distant bark of hound,
With rural sounds of labour, which the spring
With busy hum sends forth in mingled sound
The ripple of the Wansbeck, as it glides
O'er the smooth pebbles worn by fretting tides.

A long low wail of anguish on my ear,
Coming from Scotia's heath'ry hills of blue,—
Sounds distinctly in sad accents clear;
Alas! my dearest brother—him I knew
From infancy. It sounds thy knell,
And bids me take of thee a long farewell.

My brother, to thy memory thus I write ;
Oh, could'st thou lived to see this first essay,—
Thy dove-like eyes would fill'd with beaming light,
Thy cheeks would coloured at thy brother's lay.
But thou art dead ! ah, me ! and stiff and cold ;
And now thou sleeps't beneath the church-yard mould.

And art thou gone ! Oh mild and sorrowed grief;
Thou should'st have lived ; not perish'd in thy prime.
No balm on earth to us can bring relief;
No comfort here, but woe disarming Time.
Thus day by day we live in woe and weep
For him who takes, alas, his last long sleep.

He is not framed of flesh who does not feel
Stern sorrow tug his heart at such a loss.
My only brother, too ; we are not steel,
But vulnerable to death or fortune's cross ;
We are but mortal ; framed from earth with dust,
Our breathing soul confined in fleshy crust.

From the same womb as I thou hadst thy birth ;
From the same mother didst thou draw thy breath ;
Too short thy sojourn on this gloomy earth ;
Thy spirit soars to heaven, freed here by death ;
Nor looks back with regret towards this soil,
Where struggled thou for bread with daily toil.

Oh, now my heart is heavy, dull, and sad ;
Thy death hath struck upon't with sudden blow.
Thy tongue is silent, that so erst was glad :
And death hath laid a noble fellow low.

Thou'rt gone from those who ever did thee love;
And left thy weeping kindred here above.

"Whom the gods love die young;" so said the bard.
Thy death doth prove the justness of the rhyme;
The grief is bitter, and the blow is hard,
To cut the flower even in its prime;
But sweetest flowers Death mows sternly down,
And leaves rank weeds on earth alone to bloom.

O, tyrant fell! rapacious monster Death!
Could nought but him thy savage maw assuage?
Thy icy kiss drank up his balmy breath,
And stopp'd on earth his youthful pilgrimage;
Why weep I thus? his soul now dwells above,
Or never spirit sought his Maker's love.

My heart affects my muse; she sadly sings
Of Death's stern doings; not of fancy's flight.
Alas! remembrance sorrow to me brings,
Since hath his life sunk into Death's long night;
My brother! all our childhood time appears,
And whilst I think my eyes do fill with tears.

I think upon the time we wandered free,
Ere had our fortune forced us then to part;
When we did happy rove o'er bank and lea,
One voice between us—love, and loving heart.
Boys, happy ere world's great scenes we sought
Our next day's pastime but our utmost thought.

I left thee when a youth, and half score years;
I took stern buffets that my fortune gave;
And when I thought of thee, 'twas not with fears,—
For I did leave thee generous and brave;
And thought that Death when looked he on thy brow,
Would then repent, and never lay thee low.

Vain my regrets—the arrow it hath sped,
And struck my only brother in the dust.
The clay clod now must prop that loving head,
Which did thy wife conceive her daily trust.
O God! the agony which pent up grief
Within the bosom makes—and no relief.

Consumption! fell disease to youthful form,
I dreaded thee;—for on my brother's cheek
Too well I noted where the cankering worm
Fed on his wasting blood and spirit meek,
Never to quit until stern coming Death,
Robb'd with his icy kiss his balmy breath.

His veins like azure threads upon his brow,
Oh sight of woe unto affection's eyes,
Tracing their course upon a plain of snow;
His hollow temples clad in fading guise,
Too plainly doom'd thee to an early fate,
To leave the hearts that lov'd thee desolate.

Too little on this earth thy span hath been,—
And yet, enough. Thrice happy they who leave,
In early life this wild and troubled scene,—
For then their hearts for friends who die ne'er grieve.

Then rest thee in thy grave, although no stone
Marks thy sepulchre so still and lone.

But distance parts me from thy funeral,
And poverty's relentless gripe I feel.
I cannot see thee laid in narrow pall;
Nor follow thee with mourner's sadden'd zeal;
Nor mourn thee to thy grave. Fate has denied
That consolation. 'Tis a mournful pride.

It would been something to have closed thine eyes,
To smooth'd thy limbs and propp'd thy failing head,
And mourn'd thee with the proper obsequies,—
And laid thee in the garden of the dead.
Thy brother was not there. Thy loving Wife
Received thy last sigh when thou gav'st up life.

What were thy dying thoughts? Say, did'st thou think
Of us and childhood's home? or was thy state
Of mind just struggling on Death's unknown brink?
Or did'st thou gladly yield unto thy fate?
Peace to thy ashes, brother! Thou art gone;
And thus for thee, I make this bitter moan.

These tears embalm thee which I freely shed;
These verses pen I to thy memory,
Thy epitaph—which time gone will be read
By strangers, feeling little sympathy;
Tho' now his brother in disjointed rhyme
Mourns for thy loss in bud of early prime.

Thou wilt not be forgotten, tho' thy form
  Hath vanished from the earth,—and now 'tis not;
Within my heart, oppress'd by daily storm,
  Will often wander to that ancient spot,
Where thou liest sleeping,—calm and quiet now;
Hearsed in thy winding sheet, and lying low.

Thy father's, sister's, and thy brother's sighs,
  Now weeping mournfully thy timeless fate,
Waft thy young soul to heaven's paradise:
  There dwell with spirits in seraphic state;
Nor let one thought of earth e'er give thee pain,
But thus in blessed peace, for aye remain.

I will not weep that thou art gone away,—
  Why should I? Art thou not happy now?
Fled to a region of perpetual day,—
  Where skies ne'er frown, nor wintry winds do blow.
Rest to thy soul;—thou wert too good for earth;—
An angel clad in flesh e'en from thy birth!

The sun will rise; the day break in the sky,
  The sea will ebb, and rivers still flow on;
And flowers will bud and bloom, decay, and die,—
  Nor feel one touch of woe for him who's gone.
All things on earth instruct us not to weep,
Yet Nature mourns for those who silent sleep.

The mighty ocean makes resounding wail
  For those who lie untombed within its waves;
The battle field is mourn'd by autumn's gale,
  Strewing red leaves upon its bloody graves;

And forest trees groan through the rushing air,
Saying for forest dead an airy prayer.

The corn field sings with golden whispering breeze,
For the brown reaper laid in death's cold arms;
In lone churchyard the yew and tall elm trees
Mourn the occupant of hedge row farms;
The stunted trees in crowded yards of dead
Mourn the mechanic with the pauper laid.

The hawthorn sings a dirge at matin time
For the bold huntsman, who, at early dawn,
Brushed dew away—since cut off in his prime,
Or maiden tripping o'er enamelled lawn.
Some flowers may weep her loss; no thing doth die
Whose death creates not touch of sympathy

In things, however low. The great have psalms
Sung to the pealing organ through the aisle,
And pauper's prayers, bought with earthly alms,
To waft the noble unto heaven's veil.
No mournful kindred o'er my brother hung;
No sounding organ to his mem'ry sung.

And yet such is the world—so cold of heart—
So money minded—and so mammon fed;
What one would feel the shadow of a smart
For Edward's death? if each were visited
As I have been; such sorrow as I've known;
All earth would cry to heaven with dismal moan.

It does relieve my pent up fiery mind
Thus to lay down the burden of my brain;
A temporary easing do I find
From sorrowed thoughts that on my soul have lain;
Though like the wolf the frost clear moon I bay,
It cheers me much this wild and troubled lay.

Perchance my readers will feel touch of woe
Steal over them for gloomy Mieldenvold;
A transient sorrow for his hopeless woe,
Though chance his life in rugged verse be told.
They weep at fictious sorrow! though their eye
At real distress keeps coldly clear and dry!

It is the world's way; should I wonder then
We meet with no friend's sympathy for grief;
Dolphins devour their kind, when sea-tost men
Have wounded them past cure and all relief.
The rat preys on its wounded fellow—so
The gaunt wolf doth—and thus the hooded crow.

Ah! but my heart aches,—mild and pleasing Ned
Now thou art gone, indeed I think of thee;
With mournful grief my heart is visited,
And will not be assuaged by earthy fee.
Big, burning, solitary tears do fall
As these poor lines I to thy mem'ry scrawl.

Nor man nor maid, shall e'er see tear again
Dim the steeled eye of Sheldon after this;
Within thy grave, my brother, does remain
My youthful pity, do thou rest in bliss.

No more in senseless grief my muse shall rave;
Pity doth lie within my brother's grave.

"No more—oh! never more," as Byron says,
"The rest is silence,"—quoted oft enough;
Perchance my bold attempt to win the bays
Be heralded as sad and wretched stuff.
I know the stake, and boldly thus I throw
For fame, or poverty—one of them I know.

My brother—oh! my brother! fare-thee-well,
Wild and hallowed may thy lone grave be;
My muse hath sadly rung thy tolling knell,
But who—alas! will ring a dirge for me?
What matter if that fire, earth, or wave,
Here or abroad, do prove our last long grave.

My horse is summoned, let us ride along,
And as we go my muse shall rudely sing;
What in this shire is worthy of her song,
I brush at all with bold and daring wing.
Scott has his Land, and Burns his favourite Ayr;
Northumbria too of song shall have her share.

Northumberland can boast her ancient towers,
Her battle grounds, her bygone bloody fields;
Though on her plains smile now frequented bowers,
Or else full harvest to the farmer yields.
Look we for beauty of Italian scene?
The vale of Coquet rivals it I ween!

From where—from Rothbury's wild moorland plain,
By Brinkburn's Priory to Weldon Bridge,
Whose famous rendezvous do anglers gain,
Whilst towring up bold Rimside heaves his ridge
Of mountains, one above another piled!
Crowned by a wilderness as bleak as wild.

'Mid whose coarse heath the bleating sheep do feed:
The summit gained—see! Whittingham is near;
'Mid whose red heather grouse and black cock breed,
And Glanton's smoke with Eglingham's appear!
Where still the Roman's early hand is seen
In ruined forts—now clad in summer's green.

And further on—Pow Burn's small stream appears,
The tiny Bremish chiming as it flows;
Thy holmes are dotted by the farmer's steers,
And o'er thy fields sweep myriad flocks of crows.
Some two miles on, close by the road, yon wall
Doth fence the Percy's leap in paddock small.

Between those moss grown stones, score paces o'er
Did Percy's gallant steed, with dying leap,
His failing master bear 'mid battle's roar,
Whilst he awhile his foes at bay did keep.
But vain yon bound—miraculous to sight,
Both horse and rider sunk in endless night.

There is a quiet air of deep repose
About yon little ground, which strikes you more
Than do the glaring sepulchres of those
Buried in costly tombs, carved richly o'er.

Oft as I've passed it by—awhile I've stood,
And thought upon past times in musing mood.

Thence pass you over yon small trickling stream,
Hard by where Lilburn's towers high appear;
Proceeding on—perchance the setting beam
Will shine upon yon spire glistening clear,
Where Wooler, like some bird upon its nest,
On yon hill side takes for a time its rest.

And Cheviot! with his cap of snow looks down
On Humbledon and Hedgeup's lowring brow;
Where lesser hills in grandeur seem to frown,
Where at their feet do countless streamlets flow.
Dark Glen, the College, Wooler's brawling stream,
And sullen Till reflecting back day's beam.

What thoughts do Humbledon's brown plain bring forth?
Where did Phillippa scourge the Douglas' might,
When led he on the flower of the north
'Gainst Britain's chivalry in closing fight:
Shakspeare hath hallowed yonder silent plain,
And still about it interest doth remain.

If thou wouldst look on Wooler's little town,
Then 'pr'ythee get thee to Coldmartin's brow;
Yon cluster'd huts can boast of no renown;
Laying upon yon hill's side sloping low—
The "air is wooing there"—a little spot,
Which, seen in summer, ne'er should be forgot.

Upon the mountain's top, two lakes do lie,
In which the thirsty cattle come to drink;
And from Coldmartin's top thy pleasing eye
Sees that fair plain, which rapidly doth sink
In far, far distance, 'till the lessening blue
Of Lammermoor's bleak hills do stop your view:

There from the spot where Whitsunbank's great fair
Is annually held—go feast thine eyes.
See Ford's bleak hills, that pierce the viewless air;
And Cheviot's mountain ridge beside thee rise;
And look o'er Millfield plain to yonder towers,
Where princely Etal peeps 'mid summer bowers.

See Copeland's simple castle lonely stands!
Close by Millfield is a hallowed spot,
Crimsoned with blood of merry England's bands,
The soil enriched with gore of valiant Scot,
Like Waterloo; on ground rich crops should yield,
For noble blood drench'd Flodden's fatal field.

And James the Valiant, Scotland's hapless king,
In bloody battle waged a losing fight;
In vain the chiefs their forces forward bring—
Fate hath decreed they fall 'fore England's might;
And thou, their monarch, fighting 'mid the brave,
Bought with thy loss of crown a bloody grave.

Peace to thy memory! Yon rivulet,
'Tis said, ran crimson with the valiants' blood,
Where England with her foe in battle met,
And fell destruction death around them strewed:

There is a ruined well, where Scott doth say
The maid sought Marmion's ebbing life to stay.

Upon yon hill's slope mayest thou take thy stance,
And see yon ravine down to banks of Till,
Where Surrey's troops 'fore James's eagle glance
Debouched, and gained the banks of Flodden rill:
The chiefs assailed their monarch's ear in vain,
He passive stands—whilst on the heathy plain

Doth Surrey marshal in array his force:
Say, was it madness that possessed the king,
Or sense of honour, not his foeman's course
To stay; on him fell destruction fling?
The moments fly, when he should charge their flank—
'Tis now too late, for Surrey gains the bank.

Imagination traces with a thought of fire
The armies' silence ere they close in fight,
The smother'd breathing of suppressed ire,
Ere sword and spears do glance in action bright:
Like statues ranked, hushed is their warlike tread,
And their next movement almost wakes the dead.

If he who did appear to James, in dress
Of summer blue, with long and flowing hair
Of purest white, when reverend holiness
Had spread o'er king and noble hallowed air,
When in the chapel of "fayre Linlithgow"
Before the altar priest and monks did bow.

That aged man (mysterious messenger—
  Heaven or hell commissioned?—never known!)
Could tell to thee that battle's progress there,
  Where Scotland's might by Surrey's overthrown:
Some ancient ballad, hallowed by old Time,
That Man of Eld would sing in Runic rhyme.

THE BATTLE OF FLODDEN FIELD.

AN AUNCIENT BALLAD.

The king knelt at Linlithgow's shrine,
  And told his beads with pious air,
  Whilst hushed around each breathed a prayer,
In humble posture all recline;
There Scotland's monarch fervent word
Offered for victory on his sword.
Meet place in chapel—in holy mood—
T' invoke success for deeds of blood!

The vespers were not at an end,
  The king still bent in meek devotion,
  Thro' the long aisles no stir or motion,
When onward did a stranger wend,

Of stature tall—an old, old man;
Albeit his cheeks were thin and wan:
His hair in tresses white as snow
Fell down his neck in tendrils low.

A robe of blue was his attire,
Girt with a linen sash him round;
He moved withouten noise or sound;
Shot from his eyes a glance of fire,
For in them shone a majesty,
Like one accustomed to decree.
O'er king and nobles sudden fell
A tremor as tho' caused by spell,

On him each eye was fearful bent!
The king he gazed with frightened awe,
Doubting if all was true he saw.
The figure paused in mild content
Before the trembling monarch's seat,
Who reverently him did greet;
And when his voice the silence broke,
'Twas thus in hollow tones he spoke:

"I'm sent by power divine above
To warn thee from thy present course.
Cross not the Border with thy force,
For if thou dost, 'twill fatal prove,
Both to thyself and mail-clad knight.
Take heed how thou this warning slight;
And death shall fall on each compeer—
Scoff not when thou my words do hear.

"Further it is enjoined to me
To bid thee shun all women fayre,
For they will lead thee in a snare
If thou frequent'st their company."
The stranger's speech full clearly fell,
Like silver tone of sacring bell;
Nor king nor groom had power to speak,
Or yet that charmed silence break.

The figure, when his speech was done,
Made neither bow nor reverence,
Still as he came, so went he hence,
With step that beat not on the stone.
They saw him glide adown the aisle,
Whilst silence reigned around the while;
But how he vanished, when or where,
Was bounden in mysterious air.

With momentary horror strung,
King James unto his palace wends;
Awhile to superstition lends
His heart,—assailed by stranger's tongue;
But Home, with speech of treachery,
With hopes of certain victory,
Inflames the mind of Scotland's king,
Who fear unto the winds did fling.

In vain Queen Margaret with tears
Entreats her lord to quit the war,
Nor carry slaughter thus afar;
Vain are her words to rouse his fears.

"England hath knights of chivalry,
Thou can'st not win, but ah, must fly—
Then oh, thy forces quick disband,
Invade not thou *my* brother's land."

To King James's cheek the blood flew fast,
His brow burnt red with passion's ire,
And from his dark eye shot forth fire.
As quick the passion from him past—
"It glads my heart when I do know
That I shall meet with valiant foe;
Wait, then, my Queen; return I soon
With victory seated on my plume!"

Scotland hath sent her sons of pride—
Her flower of chivalry is gone,
Despising wives' and mothers' moan,
To march upon the English side.
Ford Castle for a time holds out,
But soon is stormed with hideous shout,
Mid groans and cries of dying foes,
The crash, and din, and sound of blows.

And Lady Heron—beautiful!
Assails with love the amorous king,
And Venus-like doth trancing sing,
As to the rose doth sweet bulbul;
His heart subdued, nought else remains.
Now fast enthralled in beauty's chains.
Mad king why stay'st thou toying here?
Surrey comes fast with brand and spear.

Like lion roused from noon-tide sleep,
So springs King James: when doth he know
So near the van-guard of his foe
Approaches him in marshall'd sweep.
Lost time may his destruction prove,
Orders he gives for quick remove;
But as unto his lady's tent,
With trusty guard he hurried went,

There, passing thro' a narrow lane,
Enclosed on each side by tall trees,
That waved like spectres in the breeze,
The moon shone bright o'er hill and plain,
When from the brushwood growing there,
That old, old man with silver hair,
With dress of blue in pale moonlight,
Appears he unto James's sight!

Back starts the king, as doth his train;
The figure held forth bony hand,
Pronounced these words with high command—
"Once have I warned thee, but in vain;
The last time, my commission hear:
To Scotland lead each sword and spear;
Spurn from thy heart all wanton light;
Retreat from hence this very night!"

Sprung forth the train to seize that man,
But into air he seemed to float!
They grasped the moonbeam's falling mote,
Which shewed their cheeks with terror wan.

King James unto his tent flies fast,
His mind in black despondence cast,
And there with prayer and beads all night
He passed the time till dawning light.

His lords do greet him in the morn;—
  His eyes are swollen, bloodshot, red;
  And sweat stands on his fair forehead!
Home laughs his sovereign's fears to scorn,
And ridicules that apparition,
As Margaret's plot; all imposition.
"Shew me," said James, "if this be true,
Of heaven or hell—what should I do?"

Home, with speech of fair import,
  Swears to seek out that old, old man,
  And make him change his threatened ban;
Then to the camp does he resort,
And there, amid the Sutlers bold,
He chanced to see a tall man—old.
Home shewed him gold, and bought his soul,
Heart, speech, and will 'neath his controul.

Telling him, with subtle tongue,
  The part that he would have him play,
  The words that he must boldly say,
Or failing all he should be hung.
The old man heard him silently,
Tho' glistened at times his clear gray eye;
But if 'twas malice (or dark wile),
I cannot say—that made him smile.

Quoth Home, "When thou dost see the king,
Urge thou his march towards fair England,
There let him lead both bow and brand,
No matter what the issue bring.
Go get a dress of summer blue,
A linen sash—thy hair will do;
And get thee to thy ambush straight,
I'll bring the king to thee at eight.

"But fail thou not; too well impress
On James's mind—no apparition
Came but thee—'twas imposition;
Prepare thee for thy holyness.
I trust that we now understand?
Here's gold for thee—hold forth thy hand?"
Their eyes met once—Home slightly cowered
As on him that strange, cold smile lowered.

The night is come, their post they gain,
Anxious is Home, and so the king;
The moon though veiled, at times doth fling
A chequered light adown the lane.
No noise is heard—the wind is still,
They heard the gurgling of the rill;
The night-bird screaming o'er its prey
Or the watch-dog which the moon doth bay.

A step! a rustling in the hedge,
And through the opening in the wood,
That tall and silent figure stood!
Home whispered, "Trust to falchion's edge.

Be calm; what now so wild appears
To fill your mind with foolish fears,
My life on't, proves of mortal birth,
E'en like ourselves a thing of earth."

The old man hears them; and he spoke
  Even as Home had tutored him,
  And from that figure tall—and dim
These startling words on King James broke!
"Last night I said my task was o'er,
'Tis false; I have a voice once more;
Return to Scotland,—happiness
And days of joy thy life shall bless.

But if thou stubborn tarry here,
  All Scotland will thy loss bewail."
  "'Tis done! and told my warning tale,
No more on earth I shall appear."
Then Home sprung forth amid the trees,
Yon hoary figure rough to seize;
Where is he gone? he glances round!
Has he then vanished through the ground?

No other refuge was there near;
  The moon-light fell in clearest beam,
  Illuminating all the scene,
And King James trembled with his fear.
Home searched the tents upon the plain,
I deem his search was all in vain;
Yon old man was he fiend or seer?
Ne'er to James he did appear.

Quite sunk in terror is Royal James,
When lo! a herald—messenger
From Surrey unto James's ear;
Attention from the monarch claims.
And Surrey with a challenge bold,
In courtly language knightly told,
Accuses James of breaking word
With Henry—England's Royal Lord.

"Tell martial Surrey, calumnies
Doth ill befit a warrior's tongue;
My sword shall prove he does me wrong,
So boldly here I say he lies;
And if he dares but quit his tent,
He sure shall find me on the bent—
With shield, and sword, and knightly lance,
So will I wait for his advance."

On Flodden Hill King James hath placed
His forces with a general's skill;
The Scottish army keep the Hill,
Whilst on come Surrey's bands in haste.
By hurried march and devious turn
They gain the banks of Flodden burn;
But seeing how his foeman's bands
Are placed,—now Surrey doubtful stands,

And hath recourse to flattering word,
And works on James's tow'ring pride,
To draw him from the mountain's side.
"If comest thou here to measure sword

Thou'st put thyself on vantage ground,
Like camp or fortress guarded round;
If thou art brave, and fear'st no foe—
Come, meet me in the plain below."

Chiefs crowd around their headstrong king,
(Who now prepares to charge his foe,
Meeting him with fairest blow),
Their counsel to the winds doth fling.
" Arm! arm, and charge on Surrey's flank,
With headlong fury down the bank;
Upon them!—shout our loud war cry,—
'Saint Andrew!' and the 'Lord on high!' "

From every soldier's chieftain's tongue,
At once a shout,—so deep, so loud;
Like tempest's war that trees have bowed,
O'er moor and mount defiance rung;
And ere the echo out had died,
The Scots had left the mountain side;
And charged upon their warlike foes;
Lost in a sea of blood and blows.

Now pike on lance is fearful ringing;—
And blood is falling like a shower
Thick as drops on leafy bower.
In deadly clutch faint foes are clinging;
" On! on! again!"—the trumpets sound
Is in yon dreadful conflict drowned;
The traitor Home holds from the field;
" One struggle yet, ere Scotland yield."

Now England let thy ranks hold fast,
For like a thunderbolt on high,—
Remains of Scotland's chivalry,
'Mid the loud din and bugle's blast,
Ply broadsword, lance, and failing spear,
List to the war-cries bounding clear!—
" St. George for England!" pierce the skies,
With Scotland's slogans loud arise.

In vain—in vain—yon gallant king,
Seeks victory 'mid the battle's sound;
Yet inch by inch disputes the ground.
His foemen close him in a ring,
On Flodden's banks the wounded die,
The flower of Scottish chivalry:
And many a noble knight is down,
Battling for James and kingly crown.

And gallant James, too late to save
His country, rushed 'mid thick of foes,—
Dealt round him wild and desp'rate blows;—
Then found, alas, a bloody grave!
Whilst round him lay a hetacomb
Of fallen foes (his only tomb);
Yon slaughtered knights upon the bent,
And Flodden field for monument.*

* As the great magician (Sir Walter Scott) has already immortalised the Battle of Flodden, it may be deemed presumptuous in me to measure verses with him on such a subject. As I have visited Flodden in my peregrinatory rambles, old feelings prompted the strain. In excuse of which I trust my readers will acquit me on the score of vanity or plagiarism. This was scribbled on Flodden with a large grey stone for a writing desk, and afterwards re-written in Morpeth.

Yetholm—the rendezvous of vagrant horde,
Head-quarters of each tribe, the gypsey child
Like vagrant Arab told us by Laborde,
Descended from Egyptian offspring wild;
So Yetholm, with its dark predatory clan,
Uncouthly owns the power of lordly man.

There doth Northumberland with unseen line,
Dwindle into the Scottish 'custom'd ground
Imperceptibly. Surveyors can define
The marks by which this rugged shire is bound.
The Border here doth meet the stranger's eye,
Renown'd for battle fields in history.

Here the wild mugger, or the carver wight
In bone, or wood, pursues his wretched trade;
Here asses, panniers, tents—(a motley sight),
Proclaim the owners are of gypsey grade;
Old women in red cloaks, and sun-burnt men,
Come sweeping in from hamlet, moor, and glen.

Urchins carried in their mother's hood,
With nut-brown face peer from their mufflì'd nook;
Nor lack the gypsey fare and sav'ry food;
For under tribute do they lay the brook,
The moor, and well-preserved plantation fair,
For partridge, pheasant, leveret, or hare.

True models these of Derncleugh's gypsey bold,—
The men, a lazy lounging daring race,
(As Scott in Mannering has vivid told.)
The women, too, with sly and cunning face,

Mend nets, vend horn spoons, tins, or earthen ware,
Skewers, or spell the flattering fortune fair

To easy maids, or gaping country clowns;
Cleansed of their money by the sybil's words;
Once straying o'er the burns and rising downs,
I fell in company with vagrant hordes;
And in a barn I dined with merry glee,
Off luscious fare in vagrant company.

Faa, the monarch of their wand'ring tribe
Has taught me how to throw the well-dress'd fly,
(The gypsey treads close on the player's kibe);
And how, with patient heart and watching eye,
To poise the rod and bait the deadly hook,
And snare the speckl'd trout from out the brook.

Here wild and lonely doth the many hills
Now rise. Each moor doth seem a wilderness;
Here bogs give birth to tiny tinkling rills,
By crags of granite clad in heath'ry dress;
While straggling sheep and cadgers' ponies roam
O'er moors, and pick scant food 'mid heath and broom.

Bleak, O Northumbria! thy mountains are,
Thy hills and moors crown'd with a purple bloom;
Scenes, in past days, of many a Border war,
Where Scot and fiery Southern met their doom!
I have found kindness in thy rugged shire,
To thank thy sons my present rhymes aspire.

Whether in dull cold lines I breathe my thanks,
Or in erratic mouthings vent my breath;
Or soar on high-flown wings; my muse hath pranks,
And sings alike of love, and woe, or death.
No son of Tyne myself, although my sire,
With his forebears of yore, dwelt in this shire.

Here my first flight of publishing began,
And here the rubicon of fate I pass'd;
Impress'd the names of squire and gentleman,
(Sweet ladies, too,) quick gi'en as well as asked;
Therefore some touch of gratitude is due
To those who kindness to the poet shew.

Who thinks Northumbria's sons, and daughters fair,
Are rude, unsocial,—void of pleasing grace—
Judges illiberally. They can compare
With other dames in form and laughing face,—
Though preference give I to the Southern shires,
Where Cupid arms the belles with all his fires.

I chose my wife from 'mid thy healthy daughters,
Where dwell they 'mid the bowers of thy land;
By rushing stream, slow lake, or ocean's waters,
I pick'd her forth from all the blushing band.
But what is this to you?—nought. But the poet
Would sing his wife is fair; and you must know it.

'Tis done—my wedding day is past and o'er,
And she who was my love is now my wife;
To me she hath gi'en up her maiden store,
Embarking in that state of joy or strife,

For good or ill, according as our lives
Make us good husbands or indifferent wives.

The vow which 'fore the altar did I swear,
  Most faithfully to thee my love I'll keep;
Do thou but patiently my humours bear;
  For ne'er with brutal words thy heart I'll break,
But cheer thee tenderly with love's true sign,
Augmenting still thy bliss, sweet wife of mine.

Poets have strange caprices—full of whim;
  Souls made of fire, children of the sun;
Whose thoughts should be as quick as clouds that skim
  The firmament,—full of sweet discourse or fun;
The soul of wit—possess'd of speech or trope;
The mind of Shakspeare, and the soul of Pope!

I have lov'd many maids, and in my time
  Have many women seen,—but that is past;
And I have wedded ere I've gain'd my prime,
  And caught am I in marriage noose at last.
I, who did scorn at knots am now fast caught,
And to a loving Benedict am brought!

The ship that ploughs the sea may casually
  Escape the tempest's spite perchance for years;
The hounds may chase the hare, while runs it free,
  With other proverbs which ring in mine ears,
All tending to one point, and aim, and token,
The pitcher may 'scape oft, but still is broken.

Do not thou think because my state is low,
Thy life will be a round of wretchedness,
Or that thy days with cankered care and woe
Will be embittered,—had I loved thee less
Than what I do, I had not deeply thought
Upon the state, to which I have thee brought.

This may seem metaphysical and strange,
But I will prove, sweet love, that I am right;
Years may roll on, but ne'er my love will change
From eve till morn, the same from morn till night;
What have I sworn, most true I will observe,
Nor ever from affection's promise swerve.

Thou ne'er shalt want whilst I can succour thee,
Thou ne'er shalt pine whilst I have power to cheer,
Thou ne'er shalt weep whilst I can comfort thee,
Whilst I protect thee thou shalt know no fear;
Still will I sing to thee, and glad thy heart
Until my soul doth from my body part.

What, though our marriage was a stolen one,
Secret pleasures ever relish best?
That day this year its infant course began,
Wast thou unto my bosom blushing prest.
The sea held on its tides; the clouds above
Hung out us signs to tell a poet's love.

Shall I rehearse to thee those sweet delights,
By Hymen licensed we did fall to?
Love's sweet encounter through the frozen nights,
Wrestling in courts of love which dearer grew;

No, no, I cannot, words have not the power
To tell the raptures of a bridegroom's bower.

I speak not only to the young and strong;
The man of years whose head is thatch'd with white;
Though time hath past with him in vistas long,
Still will he think (and with unfeign'd delight)
When first his youthful bride and glowing charms,
He clasp'd them speechless in his joyful arms.

Time shakes the memory, and dulls the mind
Of youthful fire; but still the beating heart
If spoil'd of every joy, love clings behind,
And from the soul that passion will not part;
The grave may cover those whom it adored,
Thought of first love still in the heart will hoard.

When did the wind with frosty kiss essay,
To pierce our chamber with his dry breath,
In one another's arms entranc'd we lay,
Such love should last methinks to latest death:
'Tis pitiful, and yet 'tis very true,
Life sometimes outlasts all the love it knew.

That day, my wife, thou left'st thy childhood's home,
The big tears coursed adown thy rosy cheek,
As if thy wedding must exile thee from
Thy girlhood's home; ah, me! thou couldst not speak,
But tenderly about my form thou flung
Thy arms, and there in very sorrow clung.

My babe may read these lines when ripening years
Have o'er her flown; then may her poet sire,
Lie in the grave past worldly hopes and fears;
Or lives in age tamed of his passion's fire.
Sweet child, think of thy sire, and this lay,
Though prosiac and dull, will not be thrown away.

Now to another theme let fire descend,
And tip the point of my engrossing pen!
While round Northumbria my fancies wend,
And brings distinctly every vale and glen
Before my mind's eye—passing swift away,
Followed by others rank'd in fair array.

Tweed's noble river! hallowed by the muse
Of life-like breathing Scott, demands my praise;
Nor gazing on thee, can a poet refuse,
To weave thee in his lyrics for the bays.
Berwick!—debated city! feudal town,
Whose walls are scarred with sieges of renown.

Thy ancient towers that baffled Edward's arms;
Thy ruined castle! noble stream and town,
Unto the lonely student offer charms,
Though here and there, thy ramparts taken down,
Destroy the spell which fancy would invest
Yon ancient town, perch'd on yon mountain's crest.

Forth from yon battery look along the stream,
Which short space flows unto the sounding sea,—
There have I mused in wild poetic dream,
Noting that picture which mine eye might see.

When in her theatre I've often played,
In tawdry robes of royalty arrayed.

How oft abused thy theatre has been,
With rogues and vagabonds, these many years;
Fellows, whose acting would disgrace a scene,
And turn to laughter any play of tears.
Ignorant fools, with dull unmeaning face,
Such reptiles the profession but disgrace.

To hear them murder Shakspere's honied line,
And "tear a passion into tatters" too!
Snivelling out woe, their rants, 'twixt howl and whine,
What torture 'twas, to be mix'd with a crew,
Who, if they knew in life their proper grade,
Would broken stones, or proper porters made.

A quiet air doth reign, deep as serene,
Through Berwick's silent streets, as plague were there;
All still and lonely. Seaports I have seen
Are famed for bustle, noise, like crowded fairs;
The sailors rolling carelessly a-down the street,
Exchanging jibe and jest with all they meet.

But here—it seems to me as all the ships
Were lying forty days at quarantine;
Sometimes a vessel ready on the slips,
Her launch will part enliven this dull scene;
Or steamers coming in from southern port:
To see whose decks do loungers all resort.

Noting her living cargo landing here
Is something new—amusement for a time;
Or walking out along the noble pier,
(Which always needs repairs with stone and lime.)
Or note the lighthouse,—like a pepper box
Perch'd like an eagle's nest upon the rocks.

Right over, (lying like all villages
On the sea-beach,) lo! Spittal there you see,
The "Brighton" of these parts, which pillages
Its summer bathers—(nay, I tell you true,)
When fervid days of sultry heat set in,
And drive the gentry here to splash and swim.

Ascending with the river, Tweedmouth lies,
Joined to Berwick by its bridge so long.
The fisher here his net in summer plies,
When salmon in vast shoals the waters throng.
In Tweedmouth's quiet, narrow, lone churchyard,
Rest the remains of Berwick's youthful bard.

Wilson! writer of "The Border Tales,"
A brother poet reverences thy tomb;
Thou'rt gone from summer's heat or winter's gales,—
Ta'en from this earth in pride of youth and bloom;
Light lie the turf upon thy clay cold breast;
And may'st thou now enjoy a heavenly rest.

When I am gone and lying 'neath the stone,
Perchance some kindred spirit will of me
Sing a requiem,—making manly moan;
And some rude lines unto my memory

Will be recorded. As to Wilson's shade,
This rambling epitaph my muse hath made.

Wilkie! eccentric squire of Ladythorne,
Hath hale in age and merry, breath'd his last.
I knew him well,—and often has he borne
His part in jest and laugh; when mirth flew fast.
The man of sober life may censure thee,
But I will reverence thy memory.

Because thou lovest the wine cup merrily,
Is that the reason they should scandal fling
Upon the turf that now doth cover thee?
I of thy noble qualities will sing:
Thou hadst a feeling heart and open hand,
A liberal purse, and mirthful at command.

These will advantage thee, I hope, on high,
More than a hypocritical demure air,
Or life of sober, mill-horse drudgery;
Yet hold—let still my muse keep language fair,
Let Wilkie's virtues linger on this earth,
His faults rest in the mould whence had he birth.

Berwick—birth-place of my first-born child,
The mother of a manly race I hope—
Let not my muse indulge in visions wild,
Or castle build in wild and dreamy trope:
My child! born humbly in thy quiet town,
May she arrive at virtuous renown!

(But time must realize this what I say)—
Melancholy Berwick's silent ramparts look;
Thy Castle, too, in ruins hoar and grey,
Where have I often pored on Shakspere's book;
Thy river! chronicled, romantic stream,
Classic, as fount of fabled Hippocrene!

Oft have I roamed along the Tweed's fair stream,
Clad angler-like to snare the finny race,
Where sweet Whitadder trembles in the beam,
Where health and exercise embrowned my face—
Snaring the trout with patient hand and eye,
Or roving where the glancing salmon lie;

Then plunging mid leg in the dark green wave,
Joyous in spirit; mountain, dale, and stream,
An exclamation of delight may crave.
Dark Norham! famed in Marmion's knightly theme:
With Berwick's sons I have spent happy time,
Our merry sports unstained with touch of crime,

Or in the cooling wave I've plunged full oft,
Buoyed up by sinewed limbs in pleasant swim;
While earth and heaven look'd so rosy; soft
The summer's noon that melts to evening;
Aboard the *Manchester*, or fisher's boat,
Perchance upon thy waves I've rode afloat.

Is there a spot upon thy grass-grown walls,
This giant limb of mine hath not spann'd o'er?
Now desolation all our joy appalls;
Thy ruin'd ramparts—moats now fail'd and hoar.

Tho' Time's rude hand, hath fallen on thee light,
Yet still thou stand'st a bold and warlike sight.

Let us pursue the indentations of thy coast,—
Ruder and savage doth thy cliffs arise;
Lo! Lamberton appears,—whose toll's the boast,
Where Scotland first meets pilgrim's wond'ring eyes,
—The northern "Gretna Green!" where lovers may
Be join'd as man and wife for easy pay.

Now heath and mountain desolate and bare,
Mingling in one, are clad in brown array;
And golden gorse gives fragrance to the air;
Or hare-bells nod with daisies o'er the way.
Now on to Eyemouth, boasting no renown—
Such as it is—a lonely fishing town.

Where the sea beats in opposing motion
Unto the rivulet that seeks its tide,—
A scanty burn,—the wide and boundless ocean
Is the rough field whence markets are supplied;
For haddocks, cod, and turbot, herrings, ling,
Which hardy fishers round the country bring.

The fishing coble in yon little creek,
Rocks like a bird upon the emerald tide.
Thy rugged harbour, where at low tides seek
The adventurous urchins where the crabs do hide;
Or when the east wind rouses from its sleep
The wild and angry waters of the deep;

Surging in giant column o'er yon bluff,
Which rising on the left protects the town.
I've seen thy waves come o'er in masses rough,
Even as untam'd winds that loud hath blown,
Rending from mast and yard the feeble sail,—
When hardy seamen shrunk to meet the gale.

How oft the wail of woe hath risen here,
For fisher drown'd in rough and violent storm,
His boat stav'd on thy rude and wooden pier;—
There 'neath thy piles hath lain his bruised form!
But when I saw thee last 'twas misty day,
Albeit the hedges put forth fragrant May.

See Coldingham, whose ruin'd Abbey fair,
Looks lonely o'er the wide and heaving sea;
Around it hangs a melancholy air,
As mostly round all abbeys wont to be;
With here and there some trees in verdure clad,
Whose branches withered, aid the picture sad.

The houses too, are "far and few between;"
Both gentle, simple,—all are but the same.
A sense of dreariness pervades the scene;
As though through foreign lands a stranger came;—
Whilst ploughmen here and there plough desert fields,
That for their labour scanty produce yields.

Proceeding on to Houndwood, Coppersmith,
No whit the better are the fields or feuars,
Half savage women stare; *sans* sense or pith,
Or loading dung carts 'mid the Lammermoors;

Here Wolf's Crag! fated Ravenswood's last keep,
Frowns like a giant o'er the dark green deep.

I almost thought, as I did look thereon,
That sombre Ravenswood would start to view;
Or Lady Ashton, Bucklaw, all would throng,—
With Alice, Craigengelt, all Fancy's crew!
Or Balderstone, who nothing said, sae crouse;
But 'twas for honour o' the "auncient house."

And now, Dunbar and castled crag appears,
And thriving harbour;—house of Lauderdale!
That all in solitary pomp uprears,
Its mansion o'er the street, like spectre pale.
Dunbar!—whose shattered castle seaward leans,
Renown'd for nought but fish and squalling weans.

Haddington's long street and ancient town!
The country round grows something better too;
But come we to a moor of great renown,—
So Tranent's famous plain appears in view,—
Where 'fore the Chevalier and Highland clan,
Away Cope's troops in nimble terror ran.

But come we now to Dalkeith's cleanly town,
That hath somewhat a southern, English look;
Such dingy dens when walk we up and down,
The eye sees not in street or private nook.
But Edinbro' hath tourists of her own,
Make o'er your darling city, critics, moan—

I ne'er was there, and so I know you not;
I came from Peebles once to clean Dalkeith;
(My destination I have now forgot);
But let me now in my extracts be brief;
For do I tire, and my muse grows dull
When from excitement I have any lull.

From Dumfries Town, where wrote I canto first
Of Mieldenvold, where Burns's gorgeous tomb
Looks o'er the scenes that had his genius nurst,
Whose fiction then lay cradled in its womb—
Oft have I wandered round the poet's shrine,
And wish his praise might after death be mine!

There sleeps he, shrouded in his country's tears:
I've look'd upon his house with silent awe—
For genius' haunt brings with it holy fears—
Sat in the *Globe*, where once his word was law,
Penned to his memory a rugged verse,
Which now 'twere tedious in me to rehearse.

At Hucknall Church, in Notting's fertile shire,
So have I bent o'er Byron's simple tomb,
What time the sun with gold, tipp'd village spire,
And seen the roses in old Newstead bloom;
Made pilgrimage to Abbotsford, when frost
Bound Tweeds fair stream—with rime the earth emboss'd.

Have I not travelled? Yea, since I was born—
Some six and twenty summers—of a life
Chequer'd with smiles and pleasure—joy and storm—
With equal hand partaking peace and strife;

And in my progress have I actions seen,
That read like fiction in a poet's dream.

Lincluden's Abbey! fair Nith's winding stream,
And so to roaring Solway's sudden tide;
Oft have I seen it tinged with sunset's beam,
Or coming in like wild horses descried:
I've wander'd many lands, and more, I hope,
Than what I sing in wild and sluggish trope.

Proceed we now to Moffat's famous wells
For mineral water, thence to Peebles' fane,
Then down the Lammermoor, whose pasture swells
In bold and lofty ridges. Upon yon plain
Is Carberry Hill, where Mary feeble fight
Offered to subjects far too strong in might.

Skirt round Dunse Law, the town lies at its foot,
"For Dunse dings a'," as Scottish proverb says;
Birth-place of Scotus—here his life took root—
Some time he studied here to win the bays;
In the Town Hall doth hang his picture rare,
Ascetic, scholar-looking, worn with care.

To Hutton's silent village let us range,
Whose graceful church the pilgrim will repay;
The Whitadder doth glide by hill and grange,
In sweet and shaded spots its course away;
No better stream for trouting can be found,
Save Till's dark stream, by Wooler's haunted ground.

In deep carouse I've whoop'd my hours away,
Swallowing "Fairintosh," like liquid fire,
When beating up subscribers, here at bay,
I've found good fellows as could heart desire:
But now, no more, for gloomy Mieldenvold
Demands that we his farther life unfold.

Like an invisible and airy being,
Follow we the Student in his chase;
His heart's consistory, his actions seeing,
Whilst vainly searches he for slightest trace,
To tell him of his bride. Yet 'twas defined
To follow the hallucination of his mind.

It was not madness bade him journey o'er
The earth's wide surface, nor 'twas grief nor care
That sent him forth to brave the ocean's roar,
To Greenland's climes or Arab's pastures fair?
But one wild hope, ne'er dying in his breast,
Which made him travel thus *sans* sleep or rest.

If this be madness, then are scholars mad—
Poets—philosophers of all ages, ranks—
Warriors or statesmen, merry, wise, or sad,
All that madness troubles in its pranks,
Were mad as was the Student; past hope diseased,
Death's dart alone from fancy him released.

But let it pass. Is madness then defined,
That it should snare man's senses thus so free?
'Tis near allied to genius; thus we find
Most learned writers on that point agree;

But mad or not, it is not mine to say,
We follow but the Student on his way.

For to our prolific muse alone is given
  The power of ærial flight by land or sea,
To sweep the caves of earth or vaults of heaven,
  Depicting actions with bold imagery;
Sweep on, untiring muse, when plumed thy wing!
On, on! and of the Student's actions sing,

On the wide, the rolling, boundless ocean;
  The blue, the free, the fresh, the ever heaving;
That reservoir of earth, whose restless motion,
  The prototype of man, no less deceiving,
Ducks low as hell, and then again as soon
Surges its spray aloft to kiss the moon.

On that wild main, the highway of the world,
  Which spurns at man's dominion, like wild steeds;
Whose monstrous billows, when in anger curled,
  Lashed into foam by blustering winds; whose deeds
Are chronicled in woe; ever in motion;
How shall we call thee, wild and treacherous ocean?

Couldst thou but speak—Oh had but thy waves a voice,
  Or but thy waters fashioned with a tongue,
Many a sad heart might methinks rejoice,
  That cheating Hope this many a year hath wrung!
Sad deeds and actions, hid within thy deep
And sluggish caves, thy waters would not keep.

Then should we know the fate of many a bark,
Peopled with manly forms; and weeping eyes
That wept their unknown fate, and long did mark
The weary lapse of year and year with sighs,
At length would dry their tears; convinced their doom
Was true they wept: for ever lost to home.

Where sleeps the President? Say, did she sink
When slumber sealed the eyes of all on board,
As hung she on the verge of horror's brink?
Why dost thou still her fate in silence hoard?
Or did she founder in the broad bright day,
Calmly and slowly: mighty ocean say?

Or was there storm and darkness, wind and rain,
The ragged lightning blazing in the sky,
As plunged she moaning on? Say, did she strain
Her groaning timbers—as convulsively
Men battle to the last of lingering life,
And then with sudden break they give up strife?

Were there pale cheeks, wan looks, and tearful eyes,
Noting the gradual wrecking of the hull?
Loud shrieks and wails, and prayers? low drawn sighs,
Which many a one drew there with bosom full,
As thought they of their home, ere did the wave
Sweep them remorseless to their rolling grave,—

Drowning in mountain billows the wild cry
Of wretches struggling in the mighty tide,
Telling unto the fighting sea and sky
How many mortals in that conflict died:

Thou keepest a secret well—nor plank nor spar
Floats up to tell their doom, or where they are.

Perchance amid the ice their vessel lies,
  Hemm'd in by snowy cliffs on mountains set,
Their brittle peaks burnished with many dyes,
  Fantastic formed dome, temple, minaret,
Which look to seamen as they plough the deep
Like mighty cities, hung on glittering steep.

Say, doth she lie a crushed and shapeless thing—
  Planks, cargo, engines, all in ruin quite?
Her tall masts gone, like bird with broken wing;
  Did her crew linger out an Arctic night,
Till cold and hunger did the work of death,
Or frost with kiss of cold froze up their breath?

Or did the fire, mastering element,
  Appal them? wrapping all in sheets of light?
The watch placed, wind fair, and the sails all set,
  Say, did she float a mass of fire bright?
Whilst haply strove the crew to keep in check
The flames, that fed on hull, masts, spars, and deck?

Then some, perchance, scared with the advancing flame,
  Leaped overboard to 'scape a fiery death;
Others sat still, regardless of the pain,
  That scorched them with its hot and hissing breath:
Burnt to water's edge, say, did she sink,
Like one o'erpowered with heat, then swollen with drink?

Or did the power which forced her o'er the foam,
  Like some huge mine sprung, scatter them on high?
Tearing her sides of oak forged iron from,
  No time for help—nay, not for one wild cry?
The last despairing yell of life, thus riven
Rudely away, and on to darkness driven?

I'll think no more! Conjecture vainly strives
  To pierce the fortune of that missing bark;
Hope sickens, too, in breast of mothers, wives,
  Who mourn sons, husbands, in thy waters dark:
Partly I'm interested, for I knew
A worthy man, one of that doomed crew.

And that he was a happy son of wit,
  Of sock and buskin—one who oft beguiled
(With harmless joke, and temper hallowing it)
  Moments, when even sour cynics smiled:
Farewell Power!—be this thine epitaph
For grave; the wide and rolling sea thou hath,

Which is thy monument! No more of this;
  Sleep where thou mayest, a briny coronal
Shall deck thy brows amid the "wild wave's wist."
  Thy doom is not unmourned: sad tears do fall
From woman's eyes, widowed; now thou art not,
In all hearts save that one thou'lt be forgot.

But to my theme: the Student and his trip;
  For now my muse indulgeth not again.
Upon the sea there floats a gallant ship,
  Whose course is o'er the wide and trackless main

To that far land Columbus first explored—
The El Dorado of those souls on board.

The pilot now hath steered the gallant bark
Safe through the rocks and shoals which line the coast;
Hemm'd in by Neptune's flood, that briny park,
(Britannia's shield of strength, and Albion's boast)
Descending to his boat, with friendly hand
He waves adieu! then pulls unto the land.

And now the sea breeze freshens. Up the shrouds
The fearless sailor springs with nimble bound,
Unfurls the canvass, which he quickly crowds
On spars and yards, whilst heels the vessel round
As though she bent her tall spars in adieu
Unto the land, which now looks dim and blue.

Farewell! for now the wind hath caught her sails,
And plunging thro' the billows on she goes;
Farewell to England's shores and fertile vales;
Farewell to friends—defiance to our foes!
The bustle, stir, and shouts, in billows drowned,
When leaving shore—the vessel's outward bound!

Now bend her masts, her jib and foresail set,
The steersman eyes the compass steadily;
The gathering surge, when winds and waves are met,
Now heels the vessel roughly on her lee:
Hark to the whistle! now her sails are slack,
Then filled, she pays away on t'other tack.

The Student stood alone—he had no friends,
No wife, or children, father, brother, son,
To call forth tears, which parting sorrow sends
When loving hearts and hands are severed from,
Where Hope may whisper "we may meet no more,"
Or "come again," or "'scape fell ocean's roar."

What cared the Student if the fresh'ning gale
Should blow a hurricane, and overwhelm,
Tearing to shreds each wide and bellying sail,
The ship refusing answering to her helm:
He did not care, he looked on life and death
With equal glance, nor cared for fame nor breath.

Nor did he feel uneasy when the waves
Broke roughly o'er the bows and drenching him;
He treated them as summer rill which laves
The adventurous urchin's first attempt to swim;
For he had that within which laughed to scorn
The war of waters, as tho' ocean born.

That sickness, not unlike misanthropy
(But 'twas not that) lay brooding o'er his heart;
Talk not to him of dull philosophy,
It could not ease the woe or dull the smart
(That constant aching) of his sorrowed soul
Which joys and passions sunk beneath controul.

With vacant eye all lustreless, and cheek
Colourless of blood and ruddy hue,
And brow all pallid with wan sorrow's streak,
As quick the vessel on her passage flew,

The Student still untiring paced the deck,
Until the land became a misty speck.

And then it sunk beneath the waters blue;
Night came anon, and then the pensive moon
Shone out unto the Student's steadfast view,
Casting around a light as broad as noon,
And stars outnumbered streaked the vault of night,
Tipping the rolling waves with broken light.

A bodily Childe Harolde—not ideal,
(As Byron hath his own resemblance drawn);
He did not ape a woe he did not feel,
Nor ills imaginary thus fly from;
But was our Student like that man of woe,
A wanderer through life for ever moe.

In silent and in lengthened glances lost,
The student mused upon his Peri's form;
His own wild fate, on rolling billows tost,
Seeking his bride thro' sunshine and thro' storm,
In meditation lost. Ah, who could say,
What was to cheer him on his trackless way!

What but that eager spring of human life,
That freshening oil unto existence wheels,
That constant armour to us in all strife.
That passion, slave, as well as monarch, feels—
Hope! well named the nurse of young desire;
Whose cradle is the grave, who feeds on fire.

Which cheers us on through rough and stormy ways.
  Lends music to the woods, light unto gloom,
That hallows life with sunshine all our days,
  Soothing sad sorrow resting on our tomb,—
Mingling both night and day in all our pleasures,
Relieving present woe by future treasures.

It leads us on as by a magic spell
  O'er the wild pathway of a stormy world,
To Tempe's vale, where blest Arcadians dwell;
  (Where flag of care by Hope is ever furled),
Where we may dance on rose leaves; where no shower
O'ercasts the sky; where sunshine hath all power.

Such led the student, comforting his soul,
  When others found a pleasure in the talk
Of answering voyagers; and haply stole
  A moment from their scanty cabinn'd walk,
To enter into converse with their kind,
Cheering with light discourse th' o'erlaboured mind.

But sullen as the surge which bore him on,
  The student by himself in silence sat;
Nor jest; his heavy gloom would wean him from
  The flash of mirth, quick wit, and social chat;
Like tow'ring Teneriffe he look'd him down
On lesser hills which bask'd beneath his frown.

And some essay'd at first to break the gloom
  Which thus had gather'd o'er him. But 'twas vain
And they the second trial desisted from;
  As though th' attempt were garlanded with pain;

And so he roam'd amid them like a sprite,
Who from lone solitude reaped stern delight.

Now weeks pass'd o'er since left the noble bark
The fostering shelter of old Albion's shore,
Yet ploughs the swelling sea, when midnight dark
Shrouds from the sailor's sight the billows' roar.
On sunny days, when cleaving dolphins play
Around her prow,—outstripping e'en her way.

A ship appears! a mast, yards, sails, and deck;
Her mainsail back'd; a furlong off she lies;
Her frowning guns her country's sons protect,
Which they have done through many victories.
Each captain greets with phrase his stern compeer,
Ere they o'er waves their different courses steer.

Letters are given; newspapers exchanged,
The gun is fir'd, each ship luffs to the gale;
Now from each others company estranged,
The vessels part,—now fills the flapping sail,
Lessening with distance to each other's view,
Then fade into yon horizon of blue.

Alack! our student had no letters, notes,
Or papers that he cared to look into;—
Let husband, sire, or wife, who haply dotes
On some lov'd form! lost to his hungry view,
Feel thrill of joy as heaves a sail in sight,
Nothing on earth could give to him delight.

The morning broke, the sun in might arose,
Filling the vault of heaven with its heat,
The light breeze died away; still hotter grows
The blinding sun, whose rays now fiercely beat
Upon the heads of those exposed unto
Its radiant fire, which tenfold hotter grew.

The vessel lay a log upon the brine,
Which in one long and lengthened swell swept on;
Far down it glittered like an emerald mine,
With pearls and sparkling jewels thickly strewn;
In vain on booms they crowd superfluous sail,
In hopes to catch a whisper of the gale.

The sun hath scorched it up,—now to the shade
Afforded by the bulwarks, boats, or spar;
Each panting wight his swelt'ring form hath laid;
While from the blister'd planks boils out the tar.
So hot the decks, nor naked hands or feet
The boards can touch, so burning is the heat.

Some swabb'd the decks with water—thus affording
A temporary coolness. But the heat
Beat fiercely down, and licked up from the boarding
Each drop of moisture; whilst a thin blue sheet
Of vapour floating in the air,—as though
The sun would draw up seas to cool his brow.

The student sat still silent in the glare,
The broad and scorching planet full on him;
Nor can I tell what then his musings were,—
With half shut eye, fierce pulse, and burning limb.

He seem'd asleep—or to a nearer glance,
He lay like one bound up in sudden trance.

Perchance he slumber'd, and did in his sleep
Dream of his fairy bride; which comforting
His fever'd soul, did thus entrancing keep
His senses bound, and as a robe did fling
O'er his pale brows a balmy influence,
That calmed his fiery heart and lulled his sense.

Oh, dream of life! oh, mortal pleasure! blest
Is he who tasteth of thy sleeping bowl.
If thus existence were a dream of rest,
How tranquil were our lives,—how rich the soul
In its estate of dreaming honours. Fame
Were then a bauble; not fit with sleep to name.

But wake, thou dreamer, to reality
Of stern existence! and the worldly ways
Of mammon-minded man with covert eye;
Whose hearts ne'er thawed in holy friendship's rays,
Wake unto plodding life, to dust and gloom,
Compared unto the joy thou wakest from.

Lo! it is night, and now a change hath come
Over the sky; the ocean and the air
No longer roll the waves with lazy hum;
The vessel through the billows' way doth tear;
The wind hath risen to a heavy gale;—
"All hands ahoy!" to take in every sail.

The sky is overcast,—and in the west
Dark mass on mass of lurid clouds are piled;
The waken'd waves are tipt with howling crest,
And roll in thundering speed like coursers wild;
And as the day droop'd, drops of heavy rain
Fall one by one---whilst doth the vessel strain

Through seas; with creaking plank and groaning beam.
Darker and darker grows the thick'ning night;
Now and again the waves phosphoric gleam,
Flashing in specks of momentary light.
And now across the sky the lightnings flash,
And then a burst of thunder ! crash on crash!

Accompanied with heavy floods of pelting rain,
As though yon crash the vault of heaven had torn.
Heels o'er the vessel like a wretch in pain,
With struggling limbs, and batter'd sides all worn.
Rain, wind, and lightning, fills the vault of night
With thunder peals! The storm is at its height.

The ragged lightning, like a nimble foe,
Played round the mast, the shrouds, and every spar,
Pitch dark the night---the ship with shudd'ring throe
Struggles against the elemental war.
And as the seamen clung to rope and shroud,
A dreadful peal of thunder, long and loud;

Deafening and frightful, like the mighty roar
Of Jove's artillery, or an earthquake's din,
Eruption of a mine, the Atlantic on the shore,
Lashing in madness, torrents bellowing:

The noise of fallen angels, when they found
Their future home would in that roar be drown'd.

And as it rattled in the lurid sky,
  Whilst sheet on sheet of lightning lit the gloom,
Waked up the Student with a piercing cry,
  Amid that frightful din his slumbers from ;
Whilst gazed the seamen on him with dismay,
As on her broadside did the vessel lay.

With one hand lightly placed upon a spar,
  There did the Student look amazed around,
As though distracted with the mighty war,
  Blinded by lightning, deafened with the sound
Of crashing thunder, whilst his dark eye flashed,
Bright as the darting light which round him dashed

Its fires harmlessly ; erect his youthful form,
  Whilst others cowered, overcome by dread ;
He looked the demon of the present storm,
  Roused by the thunder from his fiery bed
Of brooding earthquakes ? some minds temper hath
To feel delight at storm or thunder's wrath.

Whilst gazed the seamen there, the Student turned,
  As tho' attending to some airy sprite ;
Clasping his hands, as tho' some passion yearned
  Within his soul, now filled with new delight ;
His eyes were fixed as tho' on vacancy,
He looked as tho' some phantom he did spy.

There, with a garment made of spotless white,
Light on the gunwale's edge a spirit stood!
Whilst round her head there shone a halo bright,
And pointed she unto the raging flood:
Her brows were in a wreath of roses bound,
The which the lightning played incessant round!

All saw that heavenly form, light perch'd upon
The vessel's edge, as bird upon the spray,
The Student's terror seemed dispersed and gone,
As gazed he raptured on that beauteous fay:
And still approached he nearer—'twas his bride!
Who seemed inviting him to seek the tide.

He guessed her meaning, for he sprung unto
Her side, to clasp her in his close embrace;
Wild horror seized on all the fearful crew,
Mouths all agape, wild eyes, and bloodless face:
They would have staid him, but a sudden dread
Of terror o'er their limbs all helpless spread.

A moment hung the Student on the side,
Above the howling waves which raged below;
Whilst lightly leaped the vision in the tide,
And, like a snow-flake, vanished from their view:
And, with a cry of joy, the Student dashed
Into the waves, that round him madly lash'd!

With one loud shriek, all rushed unto the side,
Scared with his mad attempt, reckless and brave:
In hopes to pluck him from the dark deep tide,
Which now must prove, alas! his watery grave:

They throw o'er hen-coops, ropes, but yawl or boat,
In such a sea, would never keep afloat.

They watched the Student drift far to their lee,
Throned on the billows! By the lightning's aid
They now and then his struggling form could see,
When he stern battle with the mad waves made;
Which tossed their flaky manes in sport around
That child of earth, in loud and deafening sound.

They put the helm about, but vain th' attempt,
The gale increasing, hurled them back again;
The sails were shivered ere they could be bent,
And so they left him on the rolling main:
And right before the wind they held their course,
Which now seemed 'bating something of its force.

As if the Student, Jonah-like, did still
The storm, with sacrificing of his life
Unto the elements, to work their will—
Himself an offering to calm all strife:
So thought all there, and blest themselves with prayer,
Leaving the Student unto Heaven's care.

How fared the wretched youth? Oh let no pen
Attempt description of his agonies;
The tortures of his soul, his wild shriek, when
He plunged amid the wild and roaring seas:
The cold waves hissing round him like a pall,
As sunk he deeply down from yonder fall!

Emerging from the flood, the film forsook
His eyes; and he awoke as from a trance:
His mad attempt now on his senses strook,
As o'er the waves he threw a hurried glance:
That wildered look of wild and lost despair,
With one loud shriek rose 'mid the troubled air.

The vision, which had lured him thus to dive
Into the sea, deserted him; and now
He woke, 'mid howling waves, with life to strive,
With starting eyes, faint limbs, and icy brow;
And looked upon the ship—his former home,
As Adam did on Eden exiled from.

Oh, God! then to his thoughts there maddening rush'd
The thoughts of death unto the drowning man;
He plied with arms and legs—convulsive gushed
The water from his lips, and colder ran
His life-blood round his heart; the ship would tack
And to its bosom take the Student back.

They would not leave him there to seek a death
The worst man's lot could have, inchmeal to die;
To struggle till the waves o'erwhelm'd one's breath,
With tiring nerves, and soul of agony;
And eyeballs starting with the fearful strife,
As desperately he battled for his life.

No, no they could not do't—the vessel turns—
He saw it as the waves whirled him on high;
A moment, and the hope that in him burns
Changes to madness—to his aching eye—

The ship resumes her course ; then did he shriek,
As struggled he amid the waters bleak.

And fearfully essayed to reach the bark—
His ship, his dove of peace, Oh ! were he there,
But once upon the bosom of yon ark ;
Vain are his trials, and wilder his despair :
The waters like a feather bore him on,
Now toss'd on high, then smothered with their foam.

Yet still he struggled, till his arms grew weak,
And fainter grew his blows ; and now the waves
Broke o'er him, drowning in its spray each shriek
Of woe ; in vain attempt his life to save :
Just then his arm struck 'gainst some substance hard,
A grate of wood his farther progress barred,

Thrown over by the sailors for his aid,
In the vain hope that it might rescue him ;
And now the grating present refuge made,
He clung to it with stiff and tiring limb :
Just as the 'whelming wave rose o'er his head,
To sweep and number him among the dead.

Oh ! the wild thrill with which he threw his form
Upon that frame of wood—his ark of joy ;
A paradise to shield him from the storm,
Yet in his happiness was there alloy :
The ship stood lessening on amid the hue
Of lurid light, and now it fainter grew.

He could not frame a pray'r for this his life,
Saved, for the moment, from the roaring seas;
A momentary refuge from the strife,
Bought with a thousand fears and agonies:
And there awhile his frame exhausted lay,
While dash'd o'er him the rude and boiling spray.

As if the waves, like furies, howled in wrath,
Because his life was rescued from their maw;
The ship pursues her wide and rolling path,
Nor more of her the Student ever saw:
And now a new sensation rose to view
Unto his brain, as dreadful as 'twas new.

Here might he float upon the rolling main
For days and weeks, if life could last so long;
A speck of life upon that watery plain,
While up and down the waves, in billows strong,
Bore him now here now there, now slow then fast.
As through his brain this dreadful thinking past,

Sometimes his little raft in long low swell
Surged to a mountain's summit gradually;
Or, meeting with repulse, it sudden fell,
Dashed by opposing waters fearfully;
Or else a monstrous wave curled over him,
Threatening annihilation unto life and limb.

Whilst in his ears a low, low dirge was ringing,
A stunning feeling lay upon his brain;
The roar of waters ever round him singing,
As drifted he upon the boundless main:

His throat grew parched, his lips clung fast together,
Whilst floated he like weed or ocean feather.

And when the night came on, the struggling stars
Did faintly peep from yonder pitchy cloud;
And in the east, the sky, with streaks or scars
Of light, half-baffled, broke the Ebon shroud:
At times the moon emerged with glimmering light,
And with a misty brightness lit the night.

He could not think (as cold the night-wind blew
Upon the waters, thrown like snow along;
As thought on thought thus suffocating grew,
And crowded o'er his brain in rapid throng,)
His present situation could be real;
He could not be that wretch these woes to feel.

Fate could not thus have cast him such a wierd,
To perish inchmeal on that frame of wood;
A merciful Creator, loved and feared,
Adored in prayer, bountiful and good,
Would never suffer thus his child of clay
To drift unheeded o'er that watery way.

Thus wrung with thought, perplex'd with madd'ning fears,
The first night passed away; then came the dawn,
Showering on bud and flower dewy tears;
In woodland screen the deer uproused the fawn;
The wind hushed down, although the rolling main
Tossed yet its waves, like fevered wretch in pain.

As did the day advance, the sun broke out,
Fiery and hot; above, the glowing sky
Was like a furnace, burning round about
Like scorching rays on plains of Araby:
And then the choking drought and pain of thirst—
Oh, God! it made his throat almost to burst.

And then he thought of waving trees and fields,
Of cooling rills, of bubbling brooks and pools,
Of cheering drink the vinous tendril yields—
(Such juice the burning traveller ever cools)—
Of champagne country, river, fountain, lake,
Where cattle in mid pool their thirst do slake.

Was it not strange he thought upon these things
Whilst he lay tossing there upon the wave?
We think not on the misery which woe brings
When we are ill and on the verge o' th' grave;
So was it with the student—thought seemed lost,
For never his wild state, on ocean tost,

Came to his dreamy mind. If e'er he turned,
Upon his side to catch the freshening breeze,
Right on his face the sunbeams fiercely burned,
And parched him up in thirsty agonies;
For though around, beneath, was one wide pool,
He dare not taste one drop his tongue to cool.

And once as he did look beneath the waves,
He sow a dusky object, motionless,
Peering upward from the ocean caves,
Its eyes fixed on his face in hideousness.

Their dull red colour flashing into flame,
As upwards from his lair the monster came.

And now in narrowing circles swimming round,
He saw a shark—the monster of the deep!
His senses now, in wild amazement bound,
Fixed on the monster, who in lengthened sweep
Shot by his little raft—so close, the spray
Thrown by its plunge upon his garments lay.

Now backward, forward, sideways, then a-head,
The monster sullenly roamed here and there,
His fins and tail in lazy motion spread,
His long white fangs occasionally bare,
Struck horrid fear into that Student's brain,
As in his wake that hideous monster came.

Racked fear and madness, agonizing throes,
Now cheered by hope, now plunged in wild despair,
His power of reason now more feeble grows,
As still yon object gambolled here, now there;
And he confined!—(from his heart bursteth groan)
Like stern Prometheus unto a stone.

He looked into the heaven's burning skies,
To hide that monster from his startled view,
Although the sun struck on his aching eyes
With pain intense, that tenfold hotter grew;
And when compelled he threw them on the seas,
There still that monster mocked his agonies.

He shouted once or twice, but all in vain,
In air immeasurable his voice was lost,
He saw but cloudless sky and heaving main,
On whose wild waves the wretched youth lay tost;
Alack, that those same waves should ever bear
High Royalty, and yet uphold despair.

Borne on the bosom of the heaving deep,
A noble squadron stems the ocean's tide—
The Queen of England o'er its billows sweep,
Dancing in all appliances of pride:
A nation's praises waft her on her way,
As swift she passes headland, creek, and bay.

In vain would Neptune bar her onward path;
Tho' winds may blow and labouring billows roar,
Her barks defy almost the tempest's wrath,
As quick their onward passage plunge they o'er—
The standard of Old England at the main
Floats proudly as they skim the watery plain.

From every port fresh vessels swell her train,
From every harbour sounds of joy are heard—
Floats o'er the waves from shore a fairy strain,
Or roar of cannon, startling the sea-bird,
That sails half sleeping on the roaring waves,
Or haply roosts in some of ocean's caves.

Glad faces throng the beach. The glass is set
Seaward to catch a glimpse of Royalty;
Old age and youth, staid matrons, maids, are met
To watch her progress o'er the bounding sea—

And ever as her squadron heaves in-shore,
From earth to heaven ariseth one cheer more.

And now the clouds do lower. Lo! 'tis dark night,
  And darkness hides our monarch from our view!
Not so; upon the waves a blaze of constant light
  Illumes each vessel and her joyous crew—
And hark! the boatswain's whistle strikes the ear,
And flies o'er watery miles distinct and clear.

Be calm, thou roaring ocean—smooth thy waves;
  Lull, lull, ye winds; ye growling thunders calm;
Thy path, O Queen! lies o'er a thousand graves,
  Of corses buried there sans book or psalm—
The Queen of Britain skirts her native isle—
Winds, ocean, clouds, upon her progress smile!

Farewell awhile to Windsor's Royal towers,
  Her broad deep glades where roam the dappled deer
—Farewell Virginia's lake and Esher's bowers,
  And Claremont's noble parks—o'er waves we steer,
And miss those sights we see upon the shore;
Here all is drowned in ocean's sullen roar.

O ocean, dost thou not honour majesty?
  Wilt thou not smooth each wrinkled wave for her?
Be like a rivulet—calm and silently
  Wafting yon squadron unto Granton Pier!
I speak to thee in vain—no flatterer thou;
To queen or peasant scornest thou e'er to bow.

Welcome her, Scotia's hills and sky-topp'd mountains,
Welcome her, dark brown heaths and shaggy woods,
Welcome her, smiling plains and flowing fountains,
Welcome her, roaring streams and classic floods;
And let the cannon's roar inform the land
When first she sets her foot upon thy strand.

A long time hath elapsed since did thy Queen
Visit thy far-famed land. Ages have past,
And Time hath fled o'er many a moving scene,
Since Mary Stuart visited thee last.
Welcome to Scotland; dames and nobles stand
To welcome thee—a true and loyal band.

The night comes on again—where was his bride?
The spirit! who had tempted him with grace,
To bear her company in ocean's tide,
And thus deceived him with her angel-face?
Oh! could it be some evil sprite had power,
To warp his senses from calm reason's hour.

His mind had hitherto supported him
Amid the dreadful thoughts of his lost state;
But now he lay with cold and shivering limb,
With throbbing brow, dim eyes, and desolate:
His long black tresses drooped his bosom o'er,
Like ocean-weeds strewn on a desert shore.

His mind began to wander 'neath this trial—
He could not bring his thoughts unto one point;
One moment was he in the fairy isle,
Then on his native Rhone, quite out of joint:

His ideas, like a tangled mass of hair,
Were ravelled in a heap by wild despair.

O God! the feeling which crept o'er his brain,
  Like drowsy sleep, or like a stunning blow;
That callousness to worldly care or pain,
  That Lethe of the senses, wild and slow
The trance crept o'er his frame, despite his soul,
This lethargy outmastered his controul.

Forgetfulness was stealing o'er his sense,
  Though reason struggled yet for mastery;
And that with power so firm and so intense,
  It shook his very soul in agony:
In vain he strives—the madness seizes him
Alike, if doth his raft now sink or swim.

What feelings came upon him in the dark
  And silent hour of the watchful night?
The first incipient burst of madness' spark,
  And idiotic gleams of wandering light—
That ignus fatuous of the fevered mind,
What brain such thoughts fantastic e'er could bind?

Strange fancies haunted him in midnight hour,
  He laughed, and sang wild strains unto the waves;
And now despair asserted his wild power,
  And loud the wretched Student madly raves;
Then sinks into a moan, then horrid fears,
Relapsing after while to sobs and tears.

And now he thought strange shapes around him came,
Bright forms of seraphs, of immortal bloom!
Clad in bright glory—round their brows a flame,
As angels wear, when hath the silent tomb
Released the mortal spirit from this earth,
To join its Maker, who first gave it birth.

Of lovely graces! blooming syrens fair,
Of houris! who, with sparkling eyes of fire,
And words of honey, which the ambient air
Bore to his dazzled sense, as tones o' th' lyre;
When doth Æolus breathe on sounding string,
And music ravishing around doth fling.

Some came around him, others fanned his face,
Some offered him a raiment for his use;
Others bore to his view, with winning grace,
Ambrosial viands, and bowls of nectar'd juice:
And when he would have tasted of their feast,
He saw but midnight vault and ocean's breast.

Methought, that as he drifted o'er the seas,
A strain of heavenly music on his ear
Came sweetly borne, a burst of symphonies,
Of angel music, ravishingly faint, yet clear;
Such as the waters give, when on the land
Soft music floats from some perfected band.

At first, with long, low, swell-like coming grief,
The sounds came fitful stealing on his ear;
Then changed to tones of triumph, pausing brief,
Filling his soul with joy as well as fear:

So softly sweet, so sad, that music strayed,
Like sorrow mourning early worth decayed.

And now it louder grew, that joyful strain,
  And from a cloud of light came dashing on,
A noble vessel, o'er the illumined main,
  Flinging aside light wreaths of feathery foam:
And music floated there, blythe bells were ringing,
The hum of voices, and sweet angels singing.

And seraphims and forms, clad all in white,
  Were in that vessel placed in glorious dress;
Flashing around them shone a clear soft light,
  Those seraph forms bore marks of Heaven's impress:
Onward the vessel in its glory came,
Her sails, mast, shrouds, besprent with radiant flame.

Awhile it tarried by the Student's side,
  Who looked bewildered such a sight to see,
As rocked the ship upon ethereal tide,
  In all appliances of reality:
Then passed it swiftly from his eyesight on,
Far, far away, upon the trackless foam.

And with it fled that halo of sweet light,
  Enveloping awhile that spectral bark;
Which for a moment brought him wild delight,
  And now the sky, the sea, around grows dark:
Again he floats like weed on ocean cast,
Whilst, like a dream, the vision from him past.

And then a form came swiftly on the air,
Whose beauty maddened him as gazed he on;
So delicate, so rosy, soft, and fair!
The wretched man exclaimed in tortured groan,
"Out, devil! would'st again my reason shock?
Oh, God! why dost thou thus my judgment mock?

"I know that face, that light step on the sea,
Say whither, angel, wouldst thou have me go?
Away! to death or worse I follow thee."
The spirit faded in a radiant glow;
He rose to follow, when a sudden splash,
And sharp, short whistle, with a plunge and dash

Of waters, told him that the monster shark
Still hovered round about his raft, in wait,
To snatch the Student, when his little ark
Should, foundering, leave him to his horrid fate:
He closed his eyes, and sunk in madness down,
And, like a wild wolf, bayed the clouded moon.

The fourth day sees him like a helpless wreck,
Still on the wild waves tossing to and fro;
Whilst on the billows not a dark'ning speck
Foretells him help. And gradually low
His heart now sinks—for hunger, thirst, and want
By turns do make his wretched bosom pant.

And now the sea-birds, that at first did sweep
With frightened wing around his wretched head,
No longer thus at farthest distance keep,
But boldly on his raft their pinions spread,

And look with vulture eyes, that plainly speak
Upon his form as prey unto their beak.

Now worn so faint, he scares them with a groan
So wild, unearthly, in its accents drear;
They answer him with scream, wild as his own,
And wing their flight, o'ercome by sudden fear,
And then return anon—to be again
Roused from the raft by screams of smother'd pain.

Strange sounds assail his ears in mingled hum—
The crow of cocks—the noise of village bells—
And bark of dogs—in crowding tumult come;
And on the wind the distant music swells,
And voices call him from his dozing trance;
But vain he seeks, with wild and hurried glance,

Restless, like fevered wretch, to catch their form;
No sight around but sky and watery plain;
Rude murmurs of the seas; of coming storm;
Days yield to nights, and nights to morning's wane;
Yet still that horrid fancy o'er him broods—
Wrecked on the seas, the worst of solitudes.

Now faintly beats his heart, his pulse declines,
And reason hovers o'er her trembling throne;
A chaos of wild thoughts his mind defines—
Speech now hath left him, but a long drear groan
Occasionally breaks from parching lip,
As glares he madly round for sail or ship.

The winds arise again, the billows swell,
Yet still the ocean shark attends his prey;
The wild waves seem to sing the Student's knell;
His coffin is his raft, where he doth lay
Dying by inches—slow advance of death—
The worst of dooms—to gradual yield the breath.

Whilst like a pioneer our tyrant works,
And saps life's citadel in certain aim;
Whilst like a foe the life in ambush lurks;
'Tis vain—death, like a bloodhound on its game,
In closing circle comes full swiftly on,
'Till closing with us, so our life is gone.

He knew not now, that wretched man of woe,
How passed the time, or fled the hours away;
Convulsed awhile with agonising throe;
Now spasms racked him as he dying lay:
The sky seemed all a fire! a bloody hue
Obscured the rolling billows from his view!

Madness hath crushed weak reason's wavering power,
And down upon his brain the ruin falls:
Keep, battlement, and wall, and highest tower,
Crashing in thunder now his soul appals—
The last remains of sense hath, frightened, fled,
And left the Student with the breathing dead—

Dead to all sense of future touch of ill;
He breathes, 'tis true—the blood in creeping motion
Oozes unto his heart, which death will kill,
With slow and certain torture on the ocean:

Strange visages of horror round him grin;
Unearthly mouths seem ever mocking him.

He sees a speck of light 'pear in the sky,
A long way off, thro' thousand miles of space;
As on it dwells his wild and glassy eye,
The star comes downward with a whirlwind's pace:
He sees it coursing thro' the heaven's vale,
At whose dread flight do other stars turn pale!

And now it threatens to o'erwhelm his brain,
A roaring mass of fire, and belching smoke;
Onward with lightning speed the planet came;
And ere he prayer of mercy could invoke,
This burning cauldron of a mighty world
Seemed o'er his brain in horrid ruin hurled—

Crushing and grinding him to nothingness!
Then all seemed blank awhile, and dreary dark;
Then pain foretold returning consciousness
Of blood and pulse, but not of reason's spark.
And now upon the ocean horrid shapes
Career like furies—baboons, tiger-headed apes,

Misshapen pythons, horrent animals,
The spawn of wild and fever-'fected brains,
Such as the sober-thoughted mind appals;
His thought 's diseased, yet vividly retains
Those monstrous chimeras, which flocked around
His rolling raft, in wild and confused sound.

And now there floated up unto his view
A body, mangled by the fishes' teeth;
Its bosom swollen—its pale face gashed and blue,
Such as madness in its vision seeth:
And as the waves the body floated o'er,
Resemblance to his Peri bride it bore.

He knew that lovely face, now gashed with blood;
Corruption had begun its loathsome task;
A worthless corse, upon the briny flood,
Its eyeballs gone, in whose light he did bask—
His heart, his brain, alack! could bear no more;
A little, and the dreadful strife is o'er.

In his ravings drank he of the flood,
Deeply and madly, as 'twas wine he quaff'd—
A boiling poison seemed to seethe his blood!
Yet still he clung instinctive to the raft:
He knew no more, his senses from him fled,
And left him on that raft as one quite dead.

* * * * *

As at the word of heaven, this earth resolved
Its air, land, ocean, to their proper place,
The Student's life, not yet from flesh absolved,
His brain, reanimate with reason's trace,
Struggled once more—his eyes saw glimmering light,
After a long, long sleep in madness' night,

And men were grouped about his couch of pain;
Soft whispers and light footsteps flitted round:
Where was his raft, and where the rolling main?
For weeks his senses had been fever bound—
A ship had snatched him from his certain grave,
Whilst senseless floated he upon the wave.

END OF CANTO SECOND.

CANTO III.

THE ARGUMENT.

'Three Priests of Northumberland—Morpeth—Bothal Castle—Ballad —"The flight of Lady Jean"—Mitford Ruined Fort—Vale of Wansbeck—Felton Church and Scenery—Banks of Coquet—Warkworth—Its Hermitage and Castle—Coquet Island—Sir Bertram, the Hermit. The Hermit's Meditation—The Story of Mieldenvold resumed. The Student visits Paris, during the reign of Terror, the horrible sovereignty of Robespierre; the carnage, and all the remorseless scenes of a Revolution; the Student, led by the promptings of his diseased brain, wanders at night amid the horrors of storm and battle in a vague hope to find his Fairy Bride—his awful denunciations 'mid the tempest—his post beside the guillotine, and in a "fayre ladye," dressed in black, he recognises his long-lost Fairy Bride. His mad and extravagant joy at again beholding her—her silence and intense sorrow, he takes her to his home, dries her drenched weeds, and entreats her to relate the manner of her reappearance in life. She bids him trample under foot the Image of his Maker. He obeys—the wild and indefinite awe which steals o'er him when his Bride kisses his lips, "as if a serpent him had stung." They betake them to their marriage bed, his mother's phantom appears to him—the grisly visions of the night "thick coming fancies;" his perturbation and alarm —he sinks to sleep—his broken and agitated dreams, he awakes and finds his Fairy Bride dead at his side! He alarms the household—his horrible suspicions—entrance of the gens d'armes—terror of the soldiers. His Angel Bride, a young lady who was guillotined the day before—his despair, agony, and incurable madness, with his death.—Alnwick Castle and Grounds—Review of its past possessors—Siege of Alnwick by Malcolm—his death by Hammond—Pierce Eye, so called—River Aln—Howick Hall—Hotspur's Tower—Alnwick Moor—Freemens' Well—St. Mark's Day—Shrove Tide—Foot-ball play—Hulne Abbey—Brisley Tower—Dunstanborough—Bamborough Castle—Fern Islands and Lighthouse—Wreck of the *Forfarshire*—Grace Darling—Rescues the Crew with her Father—her decline and early death—Lindisfarne—Durham—St. Cuthbert—Ravensworth—Lambton—Prudhoe Castle—Ponteland—Gilsland Wells—Corbridge—Stagshaw Bank—Hexham—Battle—Queen Margaret—Source of the River Tyne—Dilston—Earl of Derwentwater —Newbury Ford—The "coaly" Tyne—Canny Newcassel—its buildings ---Manufactories—Booksellers—Jesmond Gardens—Lambert's Leap—Eulogy on Coal—Newcastle Races---The "Keel Row"---North Shields ---Marsden Rock---Sunderland---Tynemouth---its haven, abbey, and barracks---Ballad, "The Northern Star"---Hartley Pans---Seaton Delaval---Blyth---The Conclusion.

My tale progresses—gentle reader, say,
Yet are you weary of my rambling rhyme?
Or, in distrust, throw you the book away,
And find it no relief against dull time?
This is my last of all; yet sit and see
"Minding true things by what their mockeries be."

Scott has his haunted ground by Eildon Hills,
Burns his Ayrshire hath made classic strand;
Wordsworth is priest of Cumbria's lakes and rills,
Then crown me poet of Northumberland!
Sole monarch of the Border! tourists may
Visit thy beauties in some later day.

Within thy shire three priests at present dwell,
Good fellows all, if judge we by their names;
On Sabbath days, when knolls the tolling bell,
They, unassuming, preach in lowly fanes;
Goodall, is All good! and so Goodenough
Is as good as is Goodall—in rhyme rude and rough.

Morpeth, famed mart for northern herds of kine,
Which weekly to thy market town repair;
With flocks of sheep, and haply droves of swine,
And Irish reapers crowding, when a fair
Disturbs thy quiet state. In fancy free,
Path of the moor, Morpeth! I sing of thee.

Thy sons are niggard, not thy soil; for round
Hath Nature spread full many a loveful scene,
Of waving corn fields, with green thickets bound,
Of hill and dale, or sweeping vallies green:

Seek Mitford's ruined castle, and thine eye
A still, small ruin, will at once espy.

A little spot, but round it Nature spreads
  A scene to rival Italy's famed spots;
Trees bending downward, wave their leafy heads,
  And shadow pretty nooks and grassy plots:
Where the young lamb doth cull its tender food
Of springing herbs, which fringe that mimic wood.

Bothal! proud edifice of former days,
  When might took right; thy failing front appears,
Like hermit, silent with perpetual praise,
  A lonely record thou of former years:
Are thy walls rife with no fond, deep record,
Of days of yore, when Bertram was thy lord?

Throughout this shire, full many a pleasant spot,
  With moss-grown ancient church, and lonely yard;
(First reared by mortal hands, long since forgot—
  The rustic edifice their bones now guard:)
Are scattered up and down. Sweet Whittingham,
Felton, and Morpeth too, attention claim.

Now range we on by many a ruined pile,
  Where Warkworth's castle looks along the shore;
And grimly frowns on Coquet's lonely isle,
  Against whose rocky stance the billows roar:
Warkworth! still famed for holy hermitage,
To see whose cell do youths make pilgrimage.

Warkworth! thy hermitage—a lonely cave,
  Is fit for woe-tired sorrow-sickened wight;
All silent round thee—peaceful as the grave,
  In glaring day all still as deep midnight:
An altar of repose—as though the air
Around thy cell was redolent with prayer.

Secluded from the world, thy rocky cell,
  Shrouded by trees on brink of Coquet's side;
Here did the self-inflicting scourger dwell,
  Augmenting with his tears the rippling tide:
His beauty's shrine and tomb! within it stands
The frail memorial of the hermit's hands.

If we believe the lore, which years and days
  Have hallowed yonder little cave of prayer,
There did he dwell in penance, singing praise
  And orisons unto his "lady fayre."
If long within that cave thyself should rest,
Such thoughts as these thy fancy may suggest.

And think them written by that lonely man,
  Who founded in the rock this little cave;
And here his days in righteousness he ran,
  His dwelling, "fayre chappell," and last, his grave:
Prayer, perchance, might bring a short relief
Unto a bosom rent with hallowed grief.

There is a chasm in the flight of time:
  For many years the Student saw I not;
And he had roamed from sea to farthest clime,
  Forgotten, not forgetting his drear lot;

And Paris city held the Student's form,
When hot rebellion, like a thunder-storm,

Shook the foundation of the "grand monarque,"
And the loud tocsin rang to arms and blood;
And barricades were formed, and evening dark
Hid from men's sight that red and gory flood
Shed by the guillotine, when Robespierre
Darkened th' historic page with crime and fear.

When the bold citizens, their country's guard,
Dethroned a monarch, and defied his power;
When, 'neath the axe, the nobles neck lay bared,
And violence polluted holy church and bower;
When, 'midst loud yells, the infuriate multitude,
The dwellings of the "noblesse" into ruins strew'd.

When the devoted Swiss, true to their king,
O'erwhelm'd by thousands, desperately fought;
When night her thousand massacres did bring,
When women met a death with tortures fraught;
When the proud city to her base did rock,
And human blood bedew'd the scaffold-block.

The "sans culotte," the savage commoner,
Had revelled in the blood of Gallia's peers;
Now sated with the fight and costly fare,
When richest wines had quieted their fears;
When, through the gloom of night, at times there rung
The sounds of musquets, or the dying, flung

Into the flowing tide of sullen Seine,
The grave of many a squire and gentleman;
The laugh of citizens the hours between,
Rose in their orgies, from some riotous den:
Then walk'd the Student forth to taste the night,
And note the bloody and remorseless sight.

The night was dark, and ever and anon
The sheeted lightning quivered in the sky;
And the loud thunder, like a signal-gun,
Volley'd i' th' heavens Jove's artillery;
As if the vault above was nearly brast,
The heavy rain in showers fell thick and fast.

The Student heedlessly pursued his way,
Wrapp'd in his mantle, he defied the storm;
Before his step the dead in silence lay,
Mangled and lying on their bloody form!
The victims of stern slaughter's jubilee,
And now the furies danced with fiendish glee!

And he who, like a demon, strode along,
Loved more that tempest than the summer's sky;
He loved to rove these butcher'd dead among,
Than where the righteous in sweet slumbers lie;
And there was pleasure in this stormy night,
That to his bosom brought a stern delight.

His path lay by the bloody guillotine,
Whose death-besprinkled boards were red with gore!
Not all the waters of the sullen Seine
Could wash those stains of guilt from off the floor:

The life's blood of the innocent and meek
Lay on the scaffolding in guilty streak.

There the stern patriot for his country bled—
  There the ambitious 'neath the axe had fell;
There the fair beauty bow'd her lovely head,
  And sigh'd her last unto the tocsin knell:
There the young child had kissed its mother's breast,
And sought with her its everlasting rest.

The Student paus'd as in the warring storm
  A lull the angry elements did make;
He prayed once more he might behold that form,
  For the dear love of Jesus' blessed sake:
But once, and though the foul fiend stood at hand,
To do his bidding, and obey's command,

He held his hand aloft! the quivering shaft
  Play'd all around it in fantastic light;
Louder and louder still the furies laughed,
  And rain and tempest filled the vault of night,
And one loud burst of thunder shook the air,
In answer to the Student's impious prayer.

And vividly the lightning played around:
  There by the guillotine a lady stood,
Clad in black velvet, which beswept the ground,
  Leaning against that guilty pile of wood—
She moved not, spoke not, but with mournful air
Her hands were clasped, as though intent on prayer.

He turned unto that mourner in distress,
Touched by her sorrows and her silent grief,
And offered comfort in her helplessness,
Which she declined, as past all man's relief—
She pointed to the block and murmur'd low,
And then her sobs stole forth in stifled woe.

Her face was buried in a flowing veil,
And cold as ice drops was her fairy hand,
Her arms were like the alabaster pale,
And did the Student start, as though a brand
Had smote a thrill unto his beating heart:
Oh, happy, might he never from her part.

And the low wail of bursting grief was there;
She seemed deserted, for no friend was by,
To shelter from the storm that lady fair—
Care at her heart and sorrow in her eye—
Her dripping garments hung about her form,
As a drenched lily in the winter's storm.

And as he grasped the cold hand of that maid,
The thunder ever and anon grew loud;
He to remove her sorrows offer made;
Her fragile form beneath a tempest bowed—
He offered her his escort to her home,
Unto that lady in her grief alone.

A moment paused she—and then gracefully
She threw her dark and floating veil aside:
O God! what features did the Student see!
It was his Peri lost—his angel bride!

His dream-remembered, long-sought ladye bright!
The Student started—and with mad delight

He threw himself upon his trembling knee;
  There was his shrine where he had worshipped—
His heart beat wildly with unnatural glee;
  With giddy rapture was he onward led,
The whilst with kisses he her hand did cover,
It was his fairy bride, and he her lover!

Now poured out fast, as bursts a gushing stream,
  The incoherent ravings of his love—
The happy hours thus tasted in his dream,
  And tender as the warbling of the dove;
He stripped his mantle from his trembling frame,
To shield his Peri from the falling rain.

And flashed the lightning in one lengthened sheet,
  Filling the vault of heaven with its light,
And the loud thunder rattled down the street,
  As there the Student clasped his heart's delight;
And he did hear close by him pass, loud peals
Of laughter, like the distant sound of wheels!

And then with tender care he led her on,
  To gain the shelter of his lonely home,
Aiding her footsteps ever and anon,
  And mourning that his fairy bride should roam
So far, the terrors of the storm to dare—
So desolate, the wolf left not his lair.

His bride spoke not: and soon with hurried feet
They reached the dwelling, and the Student led
His lady up the stairs, his home to greet:
There comfort plainly o'er his hearth was spread.
He barred the door, and then with hasty stamp
Roused up the slumb'ring fire, and trimmed the lamp.

And then he wrung the moisture from her weeds,
And threw the logs upon the crackling fire,
'Till drops of toil stood on his brow like beads,
As rose the red flame up the chimney higher:
Yet never spoke his bride, though he did place
Her 'fore the flame, that played upon her face.

And pallid with the hue of sorrow's seal
Those heavenly features met the Student's eye:
Oh! what conflicting thoughts his heart did feel,
As he essayed her storm, drenched clothes to dry;
And round her snowy neck that else was bare,
A necklace of rich jewels fastened were.

Her eye retained its sweet expression still;
The glow was gone that mantled on her cheek,
Down whose smooth surface trickled sorrow's rill;
Nor would the ladye to her lover speak—
The whilst in accents wild and sadly sweet,
In plaints of love the Student did her greet.

"What ails thee, love—and dost thou know me not?
Oh! I have looked and thus have pictured thee;
Are all our former pleasures then forgot?
Thou art not fickle as false mortals be?

Why smilest thou not, sweet Peri of my heart?
Oh! why did'st ever from thy lover part?

" Oft have I search'd for thee, and look'd above
At the bright stars that dot the vaulted sky;
And pictured many a one that held my love,
Where thou lay shrined in immortality;
And envied then the pinions of the bird,
That I might see thee---and my prayer is heard.

" Thou speak'st not, sweet! and yet thy hair is wet;
Chill is thy hand that I will chafe in mine;
O! ages have gone by since last we met,
And I bewept thy loss in sorrow's brine;
Thou speak'st not; thy sweet lips do move in pray'r!
A wordless music, voiceless as the air

" Which is thy element—O Peri bright,
But speak to me once more,---my joy is wild;
A summer's day to me doth seem this night.
When last I saw thee then thy blue eyes smil'd,
(Here will I warm thee in my burning breast;)
But now they seem with mournfulness imprest.

" And I have chas'd thee on the wint'ry plain,
Upon thy bounding steed fleet as the wind,
And sought to hunt thee, love, but all in vain;
Thou left the hurricane in speed behind,
And swept o'er sky and sea to India's shore
To the spic'd Azores and frozen Labrador!

" By barren Iceland's rocks, to Ganges' stream,
To the sunny islands in the Ægean sea,
By the belted Zone, where Phœbus' scorching beam
Blackens the Nubian, have I follow'd thee!
O'er ocean's wave, unto Columbus' cliff,
Or the tow'ring heights of peaky Teneriffe!

" Wilt thou not list to me? oh, pray thee speak;
My own voice hateful sounds unto my ears;
The bloom of health hath left thy youthful cheek,
Speak, then, my Peri—speak and ease my fears;
What shouldst thou fear? it is thy lover's voice,
Bids thee, angel of my soul, rejoice."

She spoke not to him, but she sweetly smil'd,
And rose and clung to him with fond embrace;
And then she kiss'd him; and wild joy beguil'd
The Student's heart, and shone forth in his face,
Tho' left his beauty where she kiss'd, a pang,
As tho' some serpent had the Student stang.

And round his neck her arm was lightly thrown,
While gaz'd he in her mild blue eyes with glee;
A peal of thunder shook his humble home,
And flash'd the lightning by his casement free!
Our Saviour's image, fastened on the wall,
Shook by the thunder, on the earth did fall!

And by his frighten'd ear hush'd laughter rang;
He look'd upon his bride, all danger recking;
And in his ear a voice there clearly sang
" Stern death thy bridal bed with woe is decking;

Rise up and flee for holy Jesus' sake;
List not the Syren,—thy way quickly take."

Bewilder'd look'd the Student, but his bride
Upon the holy cross her feet she set!
And stamp'd upon it with exulting pride!
Uprose the Student's hair in terror wet!
While she did whisper "Come, sweet love of mine,
Crush 'neath thy foot thy Saviour's holy sign!"

How leap'd the Student's heart—it was her tongue!
And yet how strange, the first words she had spoken;
That voice of music to his heart's core rung,—
And on the shiver'd fragments crush'd and broken,
He set his heel. "Now, hell do all its worst!
For thee, oh, love, my Maker have I curst!"

She drew him to her, and her clay cold hand
Made his flesh creep, as through his tangled hair
Her fingers she did run. At her command,
He had abjured his God—that ladye fayre
Kiss'd his pale lips, that ne'er were blanch'd with fear,
He thought a fiery coal his mouth did scar!

The wasted brands shot forth a dying ray,—
Pale in its cruse the sickly lamp did burn;
Yet on the Student's heart a sickness lay!
And to his fairy bride straight did he turn.
That face angelic fair, removed his fears—
His fairy bride—long wept for many years!

Then to their rest betook the wedded pair,
Mated by destiny, and joined by fate,
And smiled upon her love the ladye fayre,
As he did lead her to her bed of state!
The gloomy corridor the twain past o'er
In solemn silence, while a light he bore.

They gained their bridal bed, sweet rest betide,—
No slumber blest them as in days of yore;
But little slept the scholar, or his bride
So sudden lost—so strangely found once more;
Blue vapours play'd around the dying lamp;
The chamber felt as though a charnel damp!

And then wild shapes did flicker thro' the gloom
And all around smelt loathsome as the grave!
Strange lights lit up at intervals the room!
They heard without the midnight tempest rave;
E'en to its very base the house did shake;
And whispering voices revelry did make.

And broken sobs and wails at times heard he;
And once the Student thought a form he saw;
But no,—'twas gone, before he might it see.
He could not pray, since heaven's precious law
He had disgrac'd. His fairy bride now slept,
But sobb'd as though she still in sorrow wept.

Again that startling shade moved through the room—
His mother's features when on earth she lived!
A ray of glory did light up the gloom,
The spirit wrung her hands as tho' she griev'd;

Sadly she gaz'd upon her son, and shook
Her head in mournfulness, and sorrow'd look.

And then she vanish'd in a glimm'ring light,
The sad tears smirching her chaste matron's brow;
And then the vision faded on his sight;
And o'er his heart in fearful guise and slow,
There stole the shadow of some wild alarms,—
He turn'd and clasp'd his Peri in his arms.

One kiss upon her cheek, one deep drawn kiss,
One look upon his Peri's eyes so mild;
One shudder at the thought of past distress,—
And like a wayward and a petted child,
Sobs into sleep upon its nurse's breast,
So did the Student sink into his rest!

But ever and anon he started up,
Rack'd by terrific dreams, and hellish sights,
A dash of bitterness flow'd in his cup,
To check the happiness of love's delights;
At length exhausted nature sank to sleep;
Nor wak'd he till the morning's earliest peep.

Soon as the day star faded from the sight,
And the loud winds had lull'd into a calm;
With the first ray of morning's rosy light,
That brush'd the dew drops from the tow'ring palm,
Arose the Student from his bridal bed,
With fev'rish dreams his rest was visited.

And on his mind there flash'd his fairy bride,
Last night's remembrance of his Peri blest;
She that so strangely in his arms had died!
Now slept beside him as a babe at rest;
And from the casement did the morning beam,
Dance on the floor in many-chequer'd stream.

His bride yet slept,—one arm lay 'neath her head,
O'er which her yellow hair lay floating free;
Her cheek was pale, the tint of summer fled,
Her brow as fair as Dian's ere might be;
Her lips were bloodless, veil'd her snowy eyes,
And tears upon the sleep-clos'd eyelid lies.

Like the hoar rime that decks the willow's branch;
Or dewy drops which on young flowers stand,
So pale a colour did her features blanch;
The Student, all alarmed, did grasp her hand:
'Twas cold and clammy as the gripe of death!
He bent o'er those sweet lips to catch her breath,—

To drink the honey balm which trembled there,
As he had done in days—their love was young,
He bent to kiss them—cold as death they were,
And then despair unto his heart strings clung:
But yet he hoped to see those eyelids rise
Their snowy curtains, and unveil her eyes,—

Within whose orbs a sea of fondness lay,
Deep and unutterable; and the silken fringe
Which love had pencilled, mocked the arching ray
Which spans the vault of heaven in coloured tinge:

Closed, alas! they lay—so calm and still,
As flakes of snow on Alp's untrodden hill.

He kist her rosy fingers; in his breast
He sought to warm the chillness of his bride,
To wake her, blushing, from her deep, deep rest;
In vain were all the arts the Student tried:
And then deep sorrow rose upon his brain,
And madness struggled to assert its reign.

Oft he had seen her lie bereft of life,
When serpent's fangs drew forth her golden blood,
Amid the horrors of the tempest's strife,
When lay he perishing upon the flood:
Yet now she lay so still, and dead to view—
He could not bear those thoughts, which maddening grew.

But springing from the couch, he rung the bell,
And called the sleeping household to his aid!
(Unknowingly he rung his beauty's knell),
And there alone with her the Student staid,
Nor knew he when the servants to him came,
So deep a trance had seized upon his frame.

The comers gazed, and marvelled at that sight,
To see that ladye fayre lie dead and cold;
The leech was summoned to that maiden bright,
But tried in vain—death ne'er forsook his hold:
Freezing each art'ry up with chilling trace,
Whilst gazed the Student on her pallid face.

And then he raved; and then he did address
His bride in accents gentle as the dove's,
Kissing her ashy brow; and then did bless
The fond remembrance of their early loves:
He held her hand until its icy touch
Assured him death had on her fixed his clutch.

And then the low mad wail of sorrow rose,
And the mad laugh, which knoweth not for why
—That holds alike dear friends as well as foes;
And the bright glancing of the tear-fraught eye;
The sudden shudder and the horrid pang,
When sorrow tears the heart with reckless fang.

"She is not dead!" so thought he, wandering,
"Bring but a mirror, and I'll prove the test;
Let but the glass with her sweet breath be dim,
And, she surviving, I am doubly blest;
This heart I'd coin in drops of blood away,
So that in health my Peri might I see."

The leech approached, and mournful shook his head:
"Nor drachm, nor potion can avail us here;
My skill is for the living, not the dead:
It is death's signal which appeareth here."
And then the priest, a reverend man, and meek,
Sought ghostly comfort in his ear to speak;

And the rich ritual for the dead he spake,
And called on Christ to cheer the stricken man;
And at that name the Student seemed to wake,
As one who suffered from a fiendish ban:

"Name not my Saviour, I have mocked his pain;
My crime is such, good priest, thou canst not sain.

"For her who lies so still before me now,
I trampled on the cross and holy sign;
For this hath heaven struck my beauty low,
And filled with madd'ning thoughts this brain of mine:
She will awake—thus twice I've seen her lie,
With bloodless lip, and death upon her eye.

"Upon her sepulchre hope ever rests,
Nor time can place his seal upon her tomb;
There angel-spirits are her wedding guests;
Tho' death may strike, my beauty yet shall bloom,
And springing from her trance in gladness sing:
Death's dart, Time's scythe, shook from her downy wing.

"She is immortal, and these mocks of death
Are but precursors to blythe days of joy;
Though envious fate awhile may stop her breath,
(As happiness is badged with some alloy),
Yet, like the phœnix springing from the flames,
I yet shall hail her with joy's loud acclaims."

"Oh! hush thy speech," the reverend father cries,
"My son, take comfort, wail no more in grief,
For ne'er again in mortal life she'll rise;
Then seek in Holy Scripture for relief,
Nor speak blasphemously. This is thy doom
When thou shalt seek the passage to thy tomb!"

"Accursed priest! now loud to me thou liest;
Shall not my heart believe what it has known?
Thy lying creed in vain to me thou criest—
Should I weep blood for tears for her who's gone?
I burn unto the brain; my beauty rise—
Shake off death's sleep—it is thy lover cries.

"But rise again, and stretch to me thy hand,
To give this holy friar loud the lie,
And I will place my soul at thy command;
But ope once more thy blue and loving eye,
I do conjure thee; by that trampled sign,
By hell's prime agent, and this soul of mine!"

As if the dead could hear the Student's prayer,
Slow rose the corpse, and sat upon the couch!
And ope'd the blue eye of that "ladye fayre,"
As on her love she laid her icy touch!
Then all flew back and gave a fearful shriek!
The priest, with trembling voice and quailing cheek,

Told o'er his beads and uttered many a prayer,
With pater nosters, while sore shook his hand;
A frightened group around stood trembling there,
Tho' all unmoved the Student did he stand,
Nor shrank nor blenched, although a thrill of fear
Rushed to his heart as though struck with a spear.

A moment paused that lady, whom the fiend
With sudden life had raised from off the bed;
Towards the Student mournfully she lean'd;
A smile wreath'd round the features of the dead,

Ghastly and pallid! Her cold hand forsook
The Student's gripe, whilst did he vacant look,

Scar'd by that grim and fiendish smile that play'd
Around those lips which he had kiss'd so oft;
And slowly then the figure of that maid,
Backward did sink upon the pillow soft;
And the dark smile which o'er her face had spread,
Faded to nothing—and there lay the dead!

All freely breath'd as though relieved from spell,
And whispering discoursed upon that sight;
The priest did pray for strength 'gainst fiends of hell,
And for the soul of that young maiden bright,
Hears'd in her beauty, clad in sombre guise;
Such sight so sad ne'er met a mortal's eyes.

With look still rivetted, and eye entranced
On the pale forehead of his angel bride;
The Student stood, nor forward aught advanced;
But kept his fix'd position by her side.
And could she die as one of mortal mould?
His heart lay buried in her breast so cold.

That like the frozen aspect of a lake,
So coldly fair, so deathlike delicate;
Silent her tongue—which music once did make;—
Frail beauty! levelled by the hand of fate!
There lay his glories in her folded up;
Unto the dregs he'd drain'd his bitter cup.

And had he found her but to lose her so?
Can this be Death which lies upon her face?
Which prints its finger on that queenly brow,
Nor yet obliterates frail beauty's trace?
Alack! that Death should strike so fair a thing,—
A snow-white dove which folds in Death its wing.

A saint reposing on his holy shrine!
A lilly sever'd from its parent earth!
The pure spring frozen in its cavern'd mine;
An infant smitten in its hour of birth,
A lamb reposing by its mother's side;
Look'd not more fair than did his angel bride.

A blank lay chilling on the mourner's heart,
A crushing weight pent heavy in his breast;
A dreamy recollection of the dart
That laid his Beauty in her last long rest;
A dreadful stillness o'er his spirit's lay;
It is the calm—the storm will sweep away.

He spoke not, moved not,—but his look of woe,
Froze up with horror all who look'd upon;
His long hair floating from his pallid brow;
His heart was bursting;—yet no sob or groan
Betrayed the wasting of life's citadel,
What anguish he endured let no man tell.

His heart was hollow, withered up, and cold;
He had no ear for those who stood around,
As hers—which soon beneath the hallowed mould
Would sleep; the clay clod on her bosom bound;

Alack, that desolation e'er should light
Upon the forehead of that maiden bright.

There was a movement 'mongst the assembled crowd,
And in there came the minions of the law;
They had been summon'd, for when grief had bowed
The wretched one unto his couch of straw,
The eye of pity cometh all too late;
The voice of charity stays not stern fate.

Close to the bed side strode the officer,
A stern gen d'arme, armed to the very teeth;
The scabbard harshly clank'd, as paused he where
That maiden lay in death so calm beneath;
And starting, as he twirled his black moustache,
That maiden still awhile his heart did dash,

More than the charging of a host of foes;
And he demanded in a frightened tone,
Whilst to his heart the blood in terror rose,—
"Who 'twas had meddled with that maiden lone;
And borne her from the scaffold where the knife
Had done its worst, and cut off mortal life."

The Student started from his silent trance,
A dreadful thought was flashing through his brain;
What magic was there or what necromance?
He grasp'd the soldier's hand his own between,—
He would have asked her fate—if that he mought,
He could not for the words stuck in his throat.

Choked with his passion.—nought the Student said,
But grasped the soldier tightly by the arm;
And pointed earnestly unto the dead,
Thus far his courage had withstood the storm,
And calm he stood until his very soul
Trembled with terror 'neath his stern controul.

And knew that soldier what he did demand,
As gasped the Student with convulsive throe,—
"The fairest maiden lived not in this land,
That might compare with her now laying low;
But yesterday she bloom'd in healthy life,
Last eve she fell beneath the fatal knife!"

More would he spake, but that the Student spoke
Words indistinct, and muttered moanings low—
As o'er his brow the drops in terror broke;
Whilst breath'd the priest his prayers faint and low.
Then stoop'd the soldier o'er his fairy bride,
And with rude grasp the necklace he untied.

And as he pluck'd that velvet band away,
A ghastly head roll'd heavy on the floor!
All blood-begrimed a headless corse there lay,
The fair brow spotted thick with specks of gore;
A dreadful shudder through all present ran,
That left their cheeks with fear and terror wan.

Thus much the Student says, and then no more,
And, groaning with the anguish of his brain,
His eyeballs starting, with his soul's racked core,
Stern madness, passion did possess his frame:

He saw the head of her he loved lie low,
Gashed and disfigured by the headsman's blow.

With pale lips quivering, and bloodless cheek,
He wrung his hands and tore his sable hair;
Then wildly did he into laughter break,
The horrid revelry of mad despair:
Stern madness o'er his mind with strong controul
Still kept up battle with his fighting soul.

His brain was all a fire, where madness lay,
A roaring furnace! and no pitying shower
Would the wild fury of the storm allay—
"The fiend," he shouted, "hath me in his power!
But to the last his power I defy,
My angel bride smile on—her brow doth lie

"Soil'd in the dust: her white and snowy neck,
The headsman's axe hath gored with bloody gash;
O'er the wild waves there floats pale beauty's wreck,"
And then all-fearful he his teeth did gnash,
Until the blood from his pale lips sprung forth,
From the heart's fountain, where the stream had birth.

And then he raved, "My princess is not dead:
Death ne'er could harm her; months and years may roll,
But still her heart with life is visited."
And as conviction o'er his senses stole,
His wailings sunk to moanings, wild and low,
As shuddered he in agonising throe

"The fiend, the fiend would lay me with the dead;
Dark shade, avaunt! thou dragg'st me down to hell;
Why should I live? is not my Peri fled?
Why rings so loud my beauty's burying knell?
One farewell kiss that we in love may part,
Oh death, it is thy hand upon my heart."

He looked his last farewell unto the sky,
That now was breaking through the casement clear;
His bride, a headless corse, did silent lie,
Death had struck down all that he held most dear:
With one wild look the Student dying fell
Upon the breast of her he loved so well.

And, like a towering cedar, did he droop,
Cleft by the woodman's axe; or falcon wild,
Shot by an arrow as in act to swoop:
He kissed the headless corse, and ghastly smiled;
Swift o'er his face death's darken'd shadow pass'd,
And in one look of woe he breathed his last.

Then rush'd the priest unto the fallen man,
And propp'd his dying form upon his knee;
And 'fore his eye, that now grew dim and wan,
The holy crucifix aloft held he:
And pray'd for mercy, as fast droop'd his head,
Until he knew his arms held but the dead.

And gradually his bright and starting eye
Grew dim and glossy with the films of death;
A shiver of the limbs in agony,
And thus the Student yielded up his breath:

The rugged oak hath fallen 'neath the blow,
And the same stroke hath struck the lily low.

And some did say, with fear, that severed head
  Did wreath its mouth into a ghastly smile;
As quick the priest his prayers rapid said,
  And held aloft his crucifix the while:
A fiendish laugh did ring upon the air,
And each there cross'd himself, and breathed a prayer.

Oh! never man beheld so sad a sight,
  That fearful room, that dead and silent pair;
The ghastly features of that maiden bright,
  That headless corse, with fair neck gashed and bare:
The frightened faces of the assembled few,
'Twould frighten boldest hearts such sight to view.

* * * * * *

'Tis over now—my tale of fear is told,
  Rank grows the grass upon the Student's grave;
His "ladye fayre" sleeps with him in the mould,
  Vainly the Winter's wind may o'er him rave;
Sorrow nor joy, despair nor racking pain,
Shall e'er distress or glad his heart again.

The oil is wasted that did feed the light,
  The strings are riven from the warbling lyre;
His day is set in everlasting night,
  And Death's cold gripe hath froze a heart of fire;
The worm hath fed upon that maiden's cheek,
Upon his angel-bride, so fair and meek.

It is a barren place where they are laid,
Upon the selfsame clod they rest their head;
Beneath the gloomy yew and cypress shade,
That sheds upon their grave its berries red:
And the deep sigh o' th' wind doth ring the knell
Of the Student and the maid he loved so well.

But let that pass—his memory is enshrined
Within a heart which dearly loved him well;
His spirit dwelt not in a common rind,
And fearful was the doom by which he fell;
And if that sorrow smiled upon his birth,
His doom was sad, his love not of this earth.

The dew will fall as lightly on his breast
As he who past his days in godliness;
Nor, though unholy be his last long rest,
Will thought of what he was disturb him less:
His final doom rests on his Maker's nod—
Live virtuously, nor fear to meet thy God.

But see fair Alnwick's Castle frowningly
O'er yon fair park in solemn grandeur lowers,
Where noble Percy, lord of land and lea,
Dwells ducally within yon pile of towers:
Upon whose walls grim warriors sculptur'd stand,
Menacing with uprear'd axe and mimic brand.

Around thy walls history's voice hath flung
A hallowed charm; for often war's dread roar,
With clash of arms, to trumpet note, hath rung
Defiance. When black Douglas, with his pow'r,

Once storm'd thy ramparts: yonder wall of stone;
For Douglas' bloody gap is daily shewn.

Due west, an arrow's flight; on yonder hill
A little pillar doth its head uprear;
Its modest front framed with a mason's skill,
Whose simple tablet doth this record bear,
That "William," Scotia's lion king, his sword
Yielded as prisoner to Alnwick's lord.

Whilst gazing on thy walls, of thought a mass
Rolls through my brain; in mingled tide I see
The heroes of thy line before me pass.
Hotspur, that flower of English chivalry,
And friend of Mortimer; whose well-earned fame
Sunk 'neath the blaze of Harry Monmouth's name.

Aln's silver stream strays by thy princely towers,
Murmuring its way unto the distant sea,
Through parks and rugged banks bedeck'd with flowers,
Rushing in forced cascade its passage free:
O'er whose banks fox-gloves in profusion grow,
Where willows bend to kiss the waters' flow.

See Howick too; its turrets well may boast
Of excellence; where dwells the stedfast friend
And sire of reform: looking to the coast
The dash of waters doth a murmur lend,
That harmonises with this quiet scene,
When on yon hall the setting sun doth gleam.

In Alnwick, see yon relic of a tower,
Which fiery Hotspur built, in ruins grey,
O'er modern buildings now doth sullen lour,
And almost barricades the narrow way:
A mockery of human power and fame,
A heap of ruins chronicles his name.

That spot's yet hallowed where the Scottish king
Gave up his breath, now marked with rustic cross,
And hawthorn blossoms that seem sorrowing
The fiery Malcolm's sad and bloody loss:
Bend mournfully above the long rank grass,
As thoughtless pilgrims by yon king's grave pass.

Eight centuries are gone since Hammond's spear,
In daring stratagem, laid Malcolm low,
Then fled. The Scottish knights, surprised with fear,
Stand horror-frozen, or benumbed with woe:
And here the dying king they mournful bore
Far from the tumult of the vanguard's roar.

Say, cannot fancy conjure up that scene?
The Scottish monarch on a couch of straw,
Or branches spread; his son, with mournful mien,
Hung o'er his sire, who haply there did draw
His laboured breath, in long and heavy sighs,
Like one who battles fiercely ere he dies.

His eyes are sightless, brow all gash'd and riven,
Upturned and bloody in the Summer's morn;
The monk the dying monarch now hath shriven,
Silent around is trumpet note or horn;

But tells that distant shout which on them falls,
That Malcolm's slayer gains the castle walls.

Then gave the king one long and dreadful struggle
Of fiery spirit, wrapt in failing clay,
Ejected from its mansion by death's juggle,
That drove the unwilling spark of life away;
That shout revived the monarch for a while,
And blind and dying did he ghastly smile.

As half upraised he glared in sightless rage,
In the direction of proud Alnwick's towers;
As though unto the last he war would wage,
With Mowbray's forces and wild Morkall's powers:
Hark! trumpet-note awakes him from his trance,
Where is his eye of fire and eagle glance?

Fell Hammond's spear hath quench'd his eye of light,
He springs upon his feet! where is his sword?
He shouts his war-cry, "Onward to the fight!"
And animates in thought his savage horde:
Waves o'er his sightless head his mail-clad hand,
As though before his force he gave command.

One shout, one war cry wild the monarch gave,
The last expiring effort nature lent;
And backward fell—fit tenant for the grave,
A dead man ere his form rolled on the bent:
The bugle's note sounds forth with wailing sound,
While sons and kinsmen kneel with knights around

In momentary sorrow. Then the fierce onslaught,
As rushed they on the castle, and their foes;
The wild hurrah, the hurried battle fought,
Mix'd with the falchion's sweep, loud shrieks and blows:
As Scots assail stern Mowbray's castle wall,
With cries of vengeance for red Malcolm's fall.

Forget we not thy moor! the merry din,
When thy young candidates for freeman's name,
Into a dirty pool, in glee rush in,
As Saint Mark's day arrives, Oh time of fame!
A penance authorised by regal John,
When hunting, floundered he thy pools among.

Hulne's silent Abbey, in secluded park,
Meets pilgrim's view. Let Meditation there
Muse on former times. While Memory's spark
Flames into thought. A solemn lonely air
Of desolation clings around its stones,
Where holy monks interr'd their brethren's bones.

For the loud anthem now the modest dove
Murmurs at intervals its loving sound;
And scream of eagle pierces through the grove,
Where did the hallelujah once resound:
A modern villa rises 'mid the wreck
Of former glory, which doth ivy deck.

In long and floating tendrils freshly green,
Like garb of youth upon a wither'd wight,
There on June Sundays haply may be seen
Alnwick's burghers and their spouses bright,

Awhile on pleasure bent, their native homes forsake,
And revel here on tea and dainty cake.

Come range around—the deer browse on the lea,
As did they in the days of Robin Hood,
Go, seek yon pillar which doth fearfully
Surmount the hill (set in yon shady wood),
Built by the Percy for a tall watch tower,
Its summit piercing from its leafy bower.

Ascending by the long and spiral stair,
The summit gained—what vision meets the eye!
Around; below; there spreads the prospect fair,
Of distant villages that misty lie;
Twelve castles may'st thou see; the Cheviots lone!
The Fell of Gateshead! Dunse-Law's rugged crown!

Far Rimside's heath and misty Simonside,
The hills of Ford, and all the line of coast,
Which stretches bounding ocean's mighty tide,
Till in dim ether is the prospect lost.
Like silver flashing, many a lowly stream.
Breaks into light beneath the noon-tide beam.

I know them all,—my feet their banks have trod
In summer days when sky was clear and bright,
When freshest green did carpet thymy sod,
And all around the sun shed dazzling light;
E'en then I thought upon the present time,
When I should sing their beauties in dull rhyme.

Dunstanborough—stronghold of the coast
In days of yore; but now it lies forlorn,
Its former glories but an empty boast;
Its walls are down; its massive ramparts torn;
Swept by the ocean's spray it still appears
Like hardy age bedecked with Nature's tears.

But pause we where from Bamboro's rugged pile,
Where once a monarch held his regal court;
Where once did sycophants and courtiers smile
Of wealth and royalty the famed resort;
But now fallen in disuse its gloomy walls,
And empty courts the pilgrim's eye appalls.

Though heavy ranks of ordnance gaping there,
Shew its vast strength as well as former power,
Those cannon thund'ring through the hissing air,
Would on the foe their iron missiles shower.
Look from its ramparts, and the lowly Fern,
Islands and lighthouses you may discern.

A cluster of small islands lying low,
Washed by strong currents, fatal oft to bark;
On land hath risen widows' wail of woe,
For those who 'neath their rocks lie stiff and stark:
Witness the *Forfarshire*, when did she dash
Upon the Longstone rock with hideous crash.

Mid storm and darkness did the heroic maid
Hear the imploring shriek of shipwreck'd crew,
O'er raging waves in fitful gusts convey'd,
Raving for help, whilst did the billows strew

At each succeeding sweep upon the shore,
Some portion of the wreck in hideous roar.

Up from her couch of sleep the maiden sprung,
  Listening only what her heart suggests,
And for a while unto the casement clung,
  To note the maddening waves, whose angry crests
Career'd in fury o'er the parting deck,
Whilst clung the passengers to helpless wreck.

A moment quail'd her heart as did she note
  The mountain billows, surging as in glee,—
And thought what danger would their little boat
  Encounter 'mid that mad and boiling sea.
Twas but a moment, for that distant cry
Again rang o'er the billows fearfully.

No time for thought. Now hesitates her sire,—
  "'Tis almost death to go, then stay my child,
The waves each moment rise in billows higher;
  No boat can live amid such breakers wild."
Again she urges him; appealing to
His heart to rescue yonder shipwreck'd crew.

Her prayer succeeds; they launch their little bark;
  Though seem the billows to engulph them straight,
The day breaks coldly, hazy—all but dark.
  No longer they for calmer weather wait,
But like a sea-bird did the heroic maid,
With her brave sire fly yon crew to aid.

Her long hair floating 'mid the rushing wind,
Her oar the boat through roaring waves impel;
Their little home, the Fern is far behind;
The wreck part hidden by the billows' swell.
Upon the waves they float; by foot untrod,
With no one near them but Almighty God.

They near the parting wreck; the passengers
Are kindly rowed unto yon rugged isle,
And landed; now forgotten all their cares;
And once again their pallid cheeks do smile,
As in yon lighthouse bending o'er the fire
They trembling bless yon maid and noble sire.

Ye who do cavil at yon maid's reward,—
Oh chase such envious sentiments away;
Let not ungenerous thoughts your bosom guard;
But to her courage do you homage pay.
A fearful chance she risk'd. If once she quail'd,
In hand or heart—then had she certain fail'd.

Naught cheer'd her on, but noble self-devotion,
To risk her life amid those howling waves,
Had she been there, perchance the glutting ocean
Would ne'er have swept unto untimely graves
Thy crew, *Pegasus!* Lo! another wreck
The annals of thy islands, Ferne! doth deck.

Ye ladies fair, "who dwell at home in ease,"
I pray you breath a silent prayer for her,
Nurtured 'mid howling winds and roaring seas,
The lily withers 'mid such stormy air.

Life's sand is almost run; upon her cheek
Consumption hangs his flag in hectic streak.

Weep all with me; for hear ye that wild bell
Proclaims the heroine hath breathed her last;
The surging sea will mournful ring her knell.
'Tis over now. Life's dream hath from her past.
In Bambro's churchyard mid the silent dead,
There have they laid the maiden's pallid head.

As if that envious fate had jealous grown
Of her brave spirit and such noble worth,
Thus nursed in solitude so lately known,
When known to stay so shortly on this earth,
Brave souls of noble gifts ascend on high,
Thus 'tis so many spirits early die.

Then farewell, Grace, thou'st found an early grave!
Light rest the earth upon thy lowly tomb!
There let sweet lilies o'er thy bosom wave,
And freshest roses on thy headstone bloom;
And let Northumbria shed for thee one tear,
Embalming thee upon thy early bier.

Thou true born daughter of Britannia's isle,
Such deed as thine deserves this rugged strain;
May heaven upon thy spirit gracious smile;—
No more thou'lt brave the wind, or breast the main.
And art thou gone? Too early sets thy sun;
Thou'st died indeed when is the victory won.

" Will fortune never come with both hands full ?
Either she giveth stomach or no food ;
Or else the food, and then the stomach dull,"
So Shakspeare writes ;—with thee this line's made good.
Just as she gained enough to sweeten life,
Existence thread was severed by Fate's knife.

Thou ocean heroine, a long farewell !
Some months ago I saw thee—and thy cheek
Look'd pale. I did not think thy mournful knell
So soon would tell the passing of thy meek
And gentle spirit. Farewell ! maid of the sea—
And these poor lines unworthy ep'taph be.

Lindisfarne's rude strand and ruin'd pile
Next claim attention from its long low strip
Of land. Upon the ocean does it smile,
For Cuthbert's holy bones have hallowed it.
Mysteriously conveyed o'er earth's wide face,
In Durham's fane the Saint found resting place.

Durham ! resort of youths, who in its college
Consume the day, but few the midnight oil
In vain pursuit of lore—which some call knowledge ;
Others eschew idea of bookish toil ;
And through the long night game with wild uproar,
Wrenching the ready knocker from the door.

Or else the light from gas lamp quick put out,
The frighting of staid Burghers in their beds ;
The hapless watch assailed with joyous shout ;
Reel home at daybreak with sore aching heads—

The future heroes of the Church and Bar;
Perchance the Woolsack—such thy students are.

Thy grand cathedral (tomb of Saint Bede's bones),
How doth thy huge dimensions awe the sight;
A wilderness of arches, pillars, domes,
With grotesque masks of dwarf or afrit sprite
On gorbels carved. Thy rich and gorgeous shrine,
Where doth thy Saint in posture low recline.

He who does listen when thy organ's swell
Takes prisoner the ear with sweet delight:
The pleasing tracery on groin and aisle,
The painted windows shedding floods of light,
Of mingled colours rich in rainbow hues,
Glitt'ring like drops of pearls, or diamond dews.

When the loud organ peals upon the ear,
The mind soars upward in Elysium dress'd;
So softly fall those notes, now sad, then clear,
And then again with melancholy impress'd.
Who would existence of a God dispute,
List to that strain, and then his creed confute.

Durham! sweet seats within thy shire dwell;
See Lambton Castle in proud majesty,
Part hid in trees on yonder grassy swell,
With all its towers tall, o'erwhelm the eye.
It's owner but a youth; for envious Death
Hath robb'd the noble Durham of his breath.

Whate'er his politics let faction pause,
And not disturb the statesman's last long sleep;
We think what now he is—not what he was;
And even men o'er fall'n foes may weep.
The grave is as a place which thrusts away
All state and faction. All is common clay.

See Ravensworth! that like a gay bridegroom,
Firmly and freshly stands with sweet parterre;
Its towers, flanking keep, and high donjon;
Rich walks, and long and noble alleys clear.
There doth the gen'rous Liddell hold his court;
Of wit and elegance the famed resort.

His lady fair, as free, as nobly born.
See Prudhoe Castle crumbling to decay;
(Prudhoe the Percy's brother) old and worn,—
It's weed hung battlements loom o'er the way;
Old walls dismantled fam'd in "auld lang syne"
Frown gloomily o'er waves of coaly Tyne.

Thence on to Gilsland Wells—Northumbria's "Bath,"
A northern "Cheltenham" on little scale,
Where invalid's seek health,—whose epitaph
Speaks lying praise; whilst dwelt they in this vale
Of woe and tears!—whose heirs with wealth content,
Raise to their mem'ry lying monument.

Here purse proud citizens resort, to cure
The oe'rfed sickness. Turtle-soup and wine!
For thee their flesh such racking pains endure;
Old age, sick youth, consumption, deep decline,

All crowd thy fane; and wait with patience fair,
Their morning's draught of mineral water rare.

Corbridge, the ancient Roman—I forget
Her name, when Hadrian's legions pitch'd their tent;
No scholar I, o'er learned names to fret,
But antiquarian for my own content:
Corbridge, at least an ancient Roman station,
Once the strong fortress of a mighty nation.

Each day the plough turns up in holy places,
Fragments of buildings, altars, helmets, stones;
Roman armour, rings, old coins and vases,
Containing withered dust of mighty bones;
Belonging haply to some son of fame,
Forgotten now, not even worth a name.

And such is glory—Alexander's dust
No better shews than does the Spartan's slave;
With age the ploughshare bears as deep a rust
As doth the falchion—so 'tis with the grave:
The man of saintly life in shroud must rot,
No better than the convict now forgot.

See Stagshaw bank, famed mart for northern kine,
For Highland drovers, hinds, and Yorkshire tykes;
In days of youth, 'twas once strange lot of mine,
To be a witness to thy buyers' freaks;
The roar of voices—oaths and rugged words,
From drunken wight strange theme for joy affords.

The tricks of coupers, jockeys, when they sell
A spavined horse, and take each other in;
Swear all is sound; famed pedigree they tell,
Disguising broken wind and halting limb:
Forth from the crowd the careful groom trots out,
The horse, urged on with whip and startling shout.

The yelp of curs, and crowds of cattle there,
The sudden break of heifer from its drove;
With all the din and bustle of a fair,
Pigs "running mucks," to gain the distant grove.
Night falls—there did I once sans bedding lay,
On Stagshaw's grass, until the break of day.

Now on to Hexham. Silent town—all still,
Like the city of departed dead,
As told in Arab's tales; so gaze thy fill
Upon yon abbey that doth lift its head,
Scorched by the flames: Oh shame to holy shades!
A slaughter-house thy ancient aisle degrades.

Pause on yon rising hill. Upon that spot
The might of England met in adverse bands;
Yon field of blood will never be forgot,
While lonely Hexham's ancient abbey stands:
High-minded Margaret, Henry's warlike bride,
Here one more venture for his kingdom tried.

Hexham, for gloves and beds of onions famed,
Pursue we now the course of narrowing Tyne,
Whose stream to swell, the lesser rills are drained,
Dwindled almost to a silver line;

Now north and south its parting streams diverge,
A farewell whispering in murmuring dirge.

And bubbling from a small mound, doth a spring
Of clearest water trickle down its side;
And here and there its crystal torrents fling,
Until it swells to Tyne's broad, rapid tide:
That river's source, whence flowing rapidly,
Augmenting as it glides to kiss the sea.

Dilston, whose aged walls seemed stained with blood,
Of Derwentwater's young and gallant chief;
Who bold in Stuart's cause unflinching stood,
On earth, alas! thy life's career was brief,
But glorious, like flashing meteor bright,
That for a time illumes the vault of night.

Then sinks in utter darkness, never more
Its fires to flash along the vaulted sky;
Deserted, lonely; may we wander o'er
Thy house and gardens, musing silently:
Dilston, thy silence sympathy may claim,
For Ratcliffe's blood hath given to thee fame.

Sail we on Tyne to Newburn's simple ford,
Where civil war first struck the foremost blow,
In Charles' reign, who sought, by dint of sword,
To lay the people's darling charter low.
"Canny Newcastle," art thou theme of mine,
Where thy old walls peep over coaly Tyne.

Northumbria's city, there thy spires arise,
'Mid smoke perpetual hanging over head;
Saint Nich'las' tower pierces to the skies,
Its lanthorn, like a crown on monarch's head:
Antique houses yet will make you smile,
Built in the ancient Elizabethian style.

A populous town of houses, modern streets,
Of new improvements, on extended scale;
Arcade and market there the stranger greets,
With rows of princely shops with goods for sale:
Their streets laid out arrests the passer's eye,
With southern cities may Newcastle vie.

See, by the river's black and sooty side,
(There industry indeed hath fixed her seat;)
Forests of masts rock on the rolling tide,
Chimneys and glass-houses the thick air heat;
Works of vitriol, soap, and foundries, all
Belch from their throats a black and smoky pall.

Which hangs in circling eddies o'er the town,
My sire's birthplace, but no place of mine;
Although I claim no village of renown,
Yet am I foster-son of coaly Tyne;
Far in the south, in Hampshire's pleasant shire,
I drew my breath, if I believe my sire.

Thy booksellers, Newcastle, let me not
Pass by those bibliopolists, without,
For their sweet kindness, giving one small shot;
For they are courteous! very kind of speech, no doubt!

When did I ask them for their sage advice,
They shunned me like a beggar, in a trice!

As if I brought the plague into their shops;
These drones suck honey from such fools as I;
We sow the seed that they may reap the crops,
Faith I'll take care from me that none they buy.
Let nothing lordly spurn its low compeer;
We all need help sometime throughout the year.

And London too, no wiser are thy fools,
Who barter Shakespere o'er a counter's span;
Milton and Spencer, sold by shopmen's rules,
Byron and Scott! Oh powers of earth! and man—
Are works of genius thus so vilely sold?
And haggled with for niggard coins of gold?

Let it all go—I now disgorge my gall,
'Tis all I can do, and 'tis harmless quite;
As soft as May-dew virtuous blessings fall,
For oft my bark is "waur" than is my bite:
Proud publishers of rhyme, henceforth be meek,
When lowly bards your sage experience seek.

Let us remember, then, thy famed resorts,—
Jesmond—the northern "Vauxhall"—where thy fair
Are squired to on Sundays. No lewd sports
Profane the day; but tea in China's ware,
With cakes are serv'd in arbours closely placed,
With beer or gin, according to their taste.

On that same road is Lambert's fearful leap,
Where did his horse with eye and teeth firm set,
Speed to the bridge which arches yonder steep,
And madly did he leap the parapet.
The steed was killed—the man surviv'd the fall;
His name and leap still cut upon yon wall.

Is not Northumbria rich in mines of wealth?
No gold, or copper, silver,—doth she own;
Her miners—rugged sons of boist'rous health,
Ply the brisk pick until the coal be won;
Winter's comforter—which causeth cricket's mirth;
Gladdener of Christmas: lamp of household hearth.

Chief feeder of the fire, which generates
From sister element, the mighty steam,
From whence the smoke which daily congregates
O'er factories, in streets, or by the stream;
Whence manufactories do owe their breath;
The fire-damp from thee brings miner's death.

Heart of machinery, that keeps in motion
The iron pulse, the untiring nerve of steel,
To drive our Mammoth steamers o'er the ocean;
Or force in dizzy whirls the rapid wheel.
All own thy power, and thy furnace force;
Steam, strength, and speed, all owe to thee their source.

Dark substance, dug from foulest caves of night,
Remains of forests, long before the flood,
From whence springs forth that dazzling blaze of light,
Illuminating streets for many a rood—

Gas—the bude light—others we might mention
Without thee—ne'er had sprung from man's invention.

Coal is my theme—most unpoetical;
Black diamond merchants crowd my muse around!
From banks of Wear to Hadrian's ruin'd wall,
Your staple produce will I loudly sound.
What, God of Heaven! shall my muse invoke,
To bid me laud with praise the source of smoke?

Newcastle Races come! hurrah for mirth,
See beer tents, camps, all spread in goodly rows;
And happy feet now tread o'erburthen'd earth;
Stools, stalls, and booths!—and see! the sights and shows,
Where plays ten minutes long delight the eye,
And motley pantomimes pass rapidly.

The race bell rings! the rush terrific grows!
The shriek and struggle now for post and line,—
Far as the eye can reach, are motley rows;
Whilst keelmen rail in language of old Tyne!
"Geordy!" "pit-sark!" "smash ye!" shower'd like hail,
With other "morceaus" rare the ears regale.

The start is given! off the coursers fly!
Their jockeys' colours fluttering in the wind;
Hark to the hum! now stifled—low—now high;
The "fav'rite" for the cup is left behind!
Now like a hurricane the steeds sweep by!
Yon bound hath won "Beeswing" the victory!

Her backers cheer!—the losers in a rage,
Swear evil fortune on fleet "Beeswing" mare;
Pride of the north! they bet their fortnight's wage
Upon her speed, with wild and careless air.
Her master—Lord of Nunnykirk, has gone
To that vile dust, from whence we first sprung from!

"Lanercost" and "Beeswing," names known well,
Frequent as household words in pitmen's mouths;
Rivalling each other's fame, they bear the bell,
As throng their partizans from north and south.
Equal with cocks and dogs, these racers gay
Swallow thy sooty children's gold away.

But wealth and fashion at the stands prevail!
See! rows of ladies, each of high degree—
An ocean, now, of pearls, of braids and veil,
Attended by Northumbria's chivalry.
The fair patricians of the north appear
To see the races—wonder of a year.

The "keel-row" melody ne'er fails to fill
Northumbria's sons with pleasure—rivalling
The "Rans de vasche," which Switzers' hearts do thrill
With thoughts of home, 'mid the infernal din
Of races, theatres, or election riot,
That tune but rarely fails to make them quiet.

And I have travelled almost England o'er;
Its sister kingdoms—ne'er did I behold
Such love for local tune or ballad lore,
As what Northumbria thy sons unfold,—

Newcastle's "Marselloise" and pitman's praise
Thrice hallowed tune of keelman roundelays.

I grieve that where the Nuns did dwell of old,
They have destroyed that antique dwelling place;
With sacriligious hand yon dwelling sold,
Where Charles once lodged; fled now is ev'ry trace;
Now modern shops and streets are o'er it spread,
But "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

So true it is that ignorance assails,
What reverend sense so jealously would guard.
Proceed we now adown Tyne's winding vales,
Whilst quays and coal staiths meet we ev'ry yard;
Dent's Hole, Bill Point, and Walker, heaves in sight;
Oh, names most villainous for me to write.

And in yon slake the murd'rer's gibbet stood
Surrounded at high tide by dashing waves;
For here the sea pours in her emerald flood;
The mighty ocean here the channel laves.
See houses, chimneys, ship masts all are crost,
And in one wild confusion blent and lost.

Shields—with her buildings line the river's side
Both north and south. No beauty is there here.
The Tyne's deep stream rolls seaward deep and wide;
Ships of all nations in close ranks appear:
And look like racers, scorning bit and check,
Seems it impossible that e'er a wreck

Yon gallant barks should in the tempest's spite,
Float with torn planks upon the billowy wave;
Or founder mid the black and dreadful night,
When shrieking sailors meet a watery grave.
And yet, 'tis so---in port each ship now rides,
Whilst gurgling waters kiss their rocking sides.

Now o'er the bar our vessel steady goes,
Where Neptune doth assert 'tis his domain,
Sea-sickness—worst of luckless mortals' woes,—
Earth doth not hold a med'cine for thy pain.
I've known it in my youth upon the sea;
Rough waves, stiff breeze, and shore upon our lea.

That listless feeling o'er your weary frame,
Fell nausea's pangs—no rest for aching head;
The vessel's lurch but adds unto your pain;
But see! the shore before our view is spread!
Look on the ocean—hoist the flapping sail,
There's health and freshness in the rushing gale.

See Sunderland!—with lighthouse, port, and dock,
Invites the laboured bark to quit the seas,
And in her harbour safely may she rock,
Nor fear the whitening wave and howling breeze.
Yon hanging bridge thrown o'er from steep to steep,
Where Smith the diver took his perilous leap.

Northward we steer,—lo! Marsden's aged rock,
In solitary grandeur rears its head;
As parted from the land by earthquake's shock;
Its crest by sea-fowls thickly visited;

It's arch by nature formed—when moonlight gleams
In summer night upon old ocean's streams.

There fancy conjures up nymphs of the waves—
  Daughters of sea-born Oceanides,
As Glaucus wooed—when dwelt he in the caves
  Of waters and of coral palaces;
Where samphire and sea-flowers waving fair,
Pillow the brows of the drown'd mariner.

Marsden!—resort of youths and maidens gay—
  Here Shields her sickly artizans may send,
To breathe the sea breeze stealing o'er the bay;
  From fam'd Newcastle troops of tradesmen wend,
And free from smoke their Sabbath air inhale,
Braving the freshness of the northern gale.

The poor man's draught of heaven's blessed air,
  Old Marsden do they on each holiday
Resort unto thy caves. The adventurous fair,
  On ladder frail ascends thy sides worn grey
With Time's rough breath, whilst fierce and lashing
    waves
Wears all thy coast in creeks and pretty caves.

Tynemouth!—with tiny bay—where invalids
  Woo the embraces of the saline wave;
Or well wrapt up, along thy promenades
  The keen north wind or coming shower brave.
How oft have I, with brother dear essayed,
To swim thy waves, or else thy creek to wade.

Ah me! I grow now old; far as I look
Backward adown the wild abysm of time,
And notice forms Death from this earth hath strook
In different ages,—childhood, youth, and prime
Of life. We are not proof 'gainst coming death,
For kings, as well as beggars, quit their breath.

Look at yon ruined fane—wouldst thou believe,
That e'er it rose in pride of pomp or power,
That kings unto those shatter'd walls could leave
Rich abbey lands or noble's princely dower,
A dying gift to shrive their souls from sin,
With dirge and mass, sweet psalm or hallow'd hymn?

Vain sophistry, as if the voice of man
Could save his fellow worm from judgment doom;
Look at yon massive walls, in breadth a span!
Within whose thickness is there concealed room,
Where all unseen might prying abbot glide,
And note the monks at morn or even tide.

If we believe the page of former days,
A king within yon ruin'd pile was laid;
And yet Time him no better deference pays
Than to a beggar's tomb in pity made.
The soldier's uniform in war's array,
Usurps the cope and stole and gown of grey.

The cannon, bomb, and bayonet, sword, and lance,
Usurp the altar, candle, book, and bell,
The trump, and stirring drum might from their trance
Awake the monks who sleep in narrow cell.

The sentinel's brief watchword meets the ear,
Where once the hallelujah sounded clear.

Oft have I roam'd amid the darkling night,
Within yon barrack-yard in musing mood,
And watch'd the lighthouse oscillating light
Fling its radiance o'er the heaving flood;
Whilst haply, music from the soldier's band
Echoed harmoniously o'er sea and land.

Mix'd with the dash of billows on the shore,
Whilst sung the wind sharp treble to the strain;
And then, perchance some cannon's op'ning roar
Lent its loud summons o'er the sounding main.
All these combin'd, with silent hour of night,
Have form'd a cheerful and a pleasing sight.

It has its ballads, too. One evening lone,
I heard a maiden thus her doom bewail,
Whilst did the ruins to the tempest groan,
And rock'd the lighthouse in the rushing gale,
Like restless spirit of the storm she sung,
Whilst Tynemouth's Abbey to her stanzas rung:

BALLAD—THE NORTHERN STAR.*

The Northern Star sailed o'er the bar,
Bound for the Baltic sea;
In the morning's grey she stretched away,
'Twas a weary time for me.

* The first verse of this ballad is not my own—I would it were. I first observed it in a penny ballad; I have forgotten the rest, and never could fall in with the lyric. The rest of the ballad is my own, but far inferior both in spirit and pathos to the original.

And many an hour in sleet and shower,
By the lighthouse rock I stray;
And watch till dark for the winged bark
Of him that's far away.

In rain, in sleet, in cold and heat,
I've paced that spot of earth;
Or when the stormy petrel pipes,
And the long waves roared in mirth.
In the evening's light, in the moonshine bright,
When the wind lay in the west;
A shadowy form rode on the storm,
And thus my ears addrest:—

The sun went down in Berwick bay,
Down in the sea went he;
And shifting sands and flinty rocks
Lay frowning on our lea.
The thunder-cloud hung in the sky,
The sea was white with foam;
Before the night, the lightning bright
Did bring the tempest home.

What mortal aid in such a sea,
What men in such a storm,
Could keep the ship from rocks a-lee,
When all her sides were torn?
Oh! weep thou mourner then no more,
Thy span of grief to dree;
In vain thou weeps, thy lover sleeps
In the depths of the stormy sea.

And now, farewell, my readers, we must part;
If I have but a moment pleasured you,
Relieved the time's dull flight, or sorrow's smart,
Then I'm rewarded,—so a long adieu:
If think you fit, give this my book a name,
For on it build I hopes of future fame.

Printed at the Warder Office, High Street, Berwick.

CANTO IV.

Again, yet once again, the pilgrim comes,
Unwilling still to take his leave of you;
To brown his face amid summer's scorching suns,
Describing well known scenes unto your view.
Southward of Durham's city doth he bend
His loitering steps, but not without an end.

Upon the "rail" I race, my engine steed
Shoots from his nostrils flame. Hurrah! we fly!
Plain, mountain, rivulet, behind us speed
On lightning's wings, scarce noticed by our eye:
The holds of Brancepeth and of Merrington
One moment peer in sight, and then are gone!

Here shineth Darlington, a lively town,
Clean built, and regular the spanning streets;
From thence to Middleton, of some renown,
With twining walks, bedecked with rural seats,
Let tourists travel other sights to see,
And from my depth of soul give praise to thee.

Here as I sit and look into the skies,
And hear the spring breeze like a maiden sigh,
The hills of "canny Yorkshire" round me rise;
Roseberry Topping, with its mountain high,
Doth meet my sight,—upon its rocky breast
The white clouds lie, like sea-bird on its nest.

By Stockton's banks, whose billows ever wear
A look like sullen smile of cherished hate,
Still down the Tees, so let me stray; to where
Sits Hartlepool, in simpleness of state,

With docks new dug upon the sandy down,
A thriving, bustling, spreading, sea-port town.

Hail to thee, Ocean! how my soul rejoices
To taste once more thy bracing, seaward air;
Methinks your waves have life—so many voices,
To chase from off my heart a poet's care!
I love to see thy stormy, roaring tide
Come dashing in upon thy sandy side!

I passed by Bishop Auckland's proud abode,
Where doth a man of reverend port reside:
Humble and meek—he giveth praise to God;
Kind without scorn—a Prelate wanting pride.
'Tis Durham's Bishop—fair befall his name,
He did me kindness when I tried for fame.

Now Raby Castle, with its trim parterres,
And clustering columns shining in the sun;
With towers, esplanade, and keep, appears
To passing wayfarers,—the abode of one
Who nobly wears his Viscount's coronet,
With kindly state—a heart and hand well met!

See Barnard's Castle! lo! we pause awhile,—
Oh, what a scene of rich delight and joy!
Earth, air, and river seem to gaily smile,—
It looks a paradise without alloy;
Whilst Tees in silent sweetness murmurs on,
Brawling in idle fret with every stone.

Here in this massive pile of ruined stones,
The "crook-backed tyrant" once made revelry;
He who "could smile"* whilst did his nephews' groans
Smite on his ear. His brutal crest you see,
Carved deep in stone, yon shattered archway o'er;
His proper badge—a bloody, ravenous boar!

The river brawls beneath the Castle hill;
Its keep—a shot-tower—now a garden fair,
Doth bloom, where soldiers flourished pike and bill.
Oh, could the Castle's founders from their lair
Have saved their fortress from this fallen state,
It had not looked, perchance, so desolate!

Did they for this oppress their neighbours' slaves?
Did serfs, to build this stronghold, lowly bow?
Where are their bones? and where the Barons' graves?
Quite undistinguished?—like their vassals now.
Come wander with me through Tee's hanging woods—
Fit walk for poet in inspired moods!

Westward, where do yon piles of purple cloud,
Seeming climbing up to Heaven, bleak Stainmoor lies;
Dark glens within the mountain's bosom shroud,
From whence the curlew and the pee-weets cries
Unheeded sound; the wild cat and the fox,
The silver moon with midnight howling mocks.

* "Why, I can smile, and murder whilst I smile."—Shakspeare's *Richard III.*

By yonder river stands lone Egglestone,*
The tomb of barons of the Yorkshire march;
What greets the eye—naves, pillars overthrown,
And here and there a tottering broken arch.
Ambition thus rewards the restless brave,
A moss grown stone to chronicle their grave.

I sat me where a rude carved effigy,
Lay rotting 'mid the nettles at my feet.
Who knew this knight? his lineage? where lived he?
This statue represented—was it meet,
When run his hero's life—in after time
His name should thus be tack'd to idle rhyme?

By Greta's bridge, so let us onward stray,
Leaving bleak Stainmoor in the distance blue;
The castled crag of Richmond, hoar, and gray,
Guarding yon little town, appears in view.
Bald, scath'd with age! yet from his rocky throne
He boldly on the waters looketh down.

What words shall Swale's broad stream true praise afford,
Thou "blue Garonne" of Yorkshire's fertile land;
The wild duck plashes 'mid her callow horde,
And leads them forth midway the shore and strand.
Oh, pass not by that Priory,† that stands
A monument of pious Edwin's hands.

* Egglestone Abbey.

* The Priory of Easeby, situated on the banks of the Swale, said to be founded by Edwin, King of Northumberland.

The Abbot's garden can be traced the while,
The willow and the aspen quiver there:
The Sun methinks hath here a richer smile—
The sky a light—the wind a holier prayer.
A paradise of earth—a spot of grace;
Worthy a poet's tomb or resting place.

Oh gentle river, Tees! thou smiling stream
Of water! that doth flow in murmurs meek
Reflecting in thy breast, the sun's beams,
That gilds full many a mountain's airy peak;
There is a freshness in thy water's roll,
That breathes a comfort to a poet's soul.

The breeze hath balm in it; so richly blent
With odorous scents from meadow and from flower;
An incense by some passing spirit sent—
A moment's joy to cheer some heavy hour;
E'en as I gaze into thy watery glass,
My childhood's days before my mind's eye pass.

Thy banks are clothed with trees, and flowers grow
E'en in the cleft roots of the antique oak;
I wander now in lanes, by green hedge row,
And see from distant vales, thin wreaths of smoke
Rise upward, mixing with the evening air,
As if 'twere incense to the God of prayer.

Let me go wander on the lone hill's side,
Buried in solitude—no living thing
Save sure-foot sheep, or browsing goat descried,
All still—save mountain birds upon the wing;

Around me, solitude—crags, peaks, and hills;
Below me—mountains, rivers, vales, and rills.

Here cease my wanderings, till once again,
I, like a wild horse, rush into the field
And shake fresh liberty from off my mane;
Until my soul shall some new ballad yield:
I ask but little in this fleeting life,
A little wealth, light heart, and free from strife.

It will not be; God doth of me expect
Fulfilment of the lot his hand hath cast;
Not gained my post, or yet my vessel wrecked,
As I began at first, so am at last:
I've read of poets, whose unmanly cry,
Was, they might, like a wild swan, sing and die.

I have returned to what I did abjure,
And print the poems that I threw away;
My thoughts, my genius, must I now immure
Within this breathing prison-house of clay:
That fiery lamp of life—oh, peace awhile,
Patience and virtue make ill fortune smile.

Give me, O God, a patient, willing heart,
Make what is fiery sink to worldly skill;
Yea! what is sensitive keep from the smart
Of insolence, or want, or worldly ill:
Let me get thro' this pilgrimage of mine,
Hereafter to Thy mercy I resign.

THE END.

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